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IN REPLY REFER TO  
AGAM-P (M) (27 Mar 68) FOR OT RD 682001

29 March 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Fundamentals of Infantry  
Tactics, 1st Infantry Division, 1 February 1968 (U)

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2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO San Francisco 96345

AVDB-CG

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: Fundamentals of Infantry Tactics

TO: Brigade, Battalion, and Company Commanders

1. Swift and enduring lessons in tactics are taught by the Viet Cong, but combat experience is a hard and costly school. I am concerned that as leaders rotate, our battle-won wisdom shrinks. However, I am convinced that if we help successor leaders to grasp a few tactical principles and basic techniques, victory—and comparatively inexpensive victory—will invariably crown our future undertakings. Therefore, I have asked a group of seasoned officers to draw up the enclosed compendium based on their combat experiences. I direct each of you to study it carefully, and to use it as your guideline for operations and training.

2. I will expect to find in your command, at the minimum, evidence of your attention to and emphasis upon:

- a. Exploiting artillery and air firepower for all missions.
- b. Maintaining security and dispersion under all circumstances.
- c. Moving to contact with particular care to find the enemy with scouts.
- d. Controlling advanced elements tightly, so that at any time precise position of units is known, and immediate use of air and artillery is possible.
- e. Searching the battlefield with system and thoroughness.
- f. Digging defensive positions which are well fortified to the front and overhead, with weapons sited painstakingly for maximum surprise and flanking fire upon an assaulting enemy.

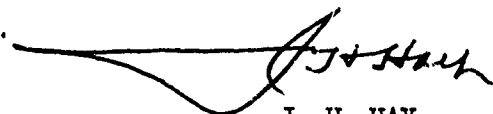
3. The hallmarks of the 1st Division leaders, our distinctive professional traits, have been (1) violent, massive firepower; (2) firm control of maneuver at all times; (3) security under all conditions; (4) cloverleaf patrolling; and (5) deep foxholes with full frontal

AVDB-CG

1 February 1968

SUBJECT: Fundamentals of Infantry Tactics

berm overhead cover, and 45 degree firing ports. That future leaders of the Big Red One are similarly endowed is my most serious responsibility, and yours.



J. H. HAY  
Major General, USA  
Commanding

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# FUNDAMENTALS OF INFANTRY TACTICS

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## CHAPTER 1

### THE ENEMY

1. INTELLIGENCE IS FOR ALL COMMANDERS: The tactical area of interest (TAOI) of the 1st Division encompasses BINH DUONG Province--the seedbed of armed communism in Vietnam--eastern War Zone C, western War Zone D, and the infiltration routes through BINH LONG and PHUOC LONG Provinces. Table I identifies the principal Viet Cong formations operating within the TAOI, both main force and local force. 1st Division leaders should take advantage of every opportunity to learn about these units, and their strengths and weaknesses. In this war, intelligence cannot be relegated to staff specialists; it governs our tactics no less than our plans and operations.

2. MAIN FORCE UNITS: a. Since 1962 the Viet Cong have relied strategically on main force units of regiment and division size, composed of full time soldiers. The 9th Light Infantry Division, among the oldest and most successful of the VC main force organizations, operated during 1965 north of SAIGON down to the metropolitan suburbs. Since 1965 operations of the 1st Division have driven the 9th Division northward, away from the centers of population, into the jungles of War Zones C and D. A series of tactical defeats administered by the 1st Division have seriously depleted the regiments of the 9th Division, and its original South Vietnamese soldiers have been replaced by North Vietnamese especially among the cadre and leaders. It is estimated

that in excess of 50% of the troop strength of the division is now NVA.

b. The 7th North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Division also operates in the northern section of the TAOI primarily in the northern border area between BINH LONG and TAY NINH Provinces. It is a North Vietnamese Army Division, not a VC division. Its personnel are consequently less familiar with the terrain and the tactics of guerrilla warfare.

c. Main force units normally operate in elements no smaller than battalion, and are well equipped with a full range of modern infantry weapons, including heavy machine guns, mortar, RPG's, and recoilless rifles. 122mm rockets and heavy mortars have been encountered. Unit communications equipment—largely wire, with some radios—is adequate. Some weaknesses may lie in the morale, motivation, and state of training of the VC soldiers within main force units stemming from tensions between Northerners and Southerners, continued deprivation of the pleasures of civilization, lack of familiarity with the terrain, disease, and in some instances starvation. These occasionally detract from unit efficiency, but not dependably so.

3. LOCAL FORCE UNITS: a. VC local forces are organized into provincial battalions, district level companies and full time local guerrillas associated with village and hamlet areas. There are also village self-defense elements, both overt and covert. Finally, there is the complete network of administrative and political cadre, both party and parallel front which exists from COSVN through hamlet.

b. Normally, local force units are not as well uniformed or

equipped as main force units, but their knowledge of terrain and the expertise developed over a period of years in many cases make them more skilled in many ways than their NVA counterparts in main force units. As the jungle has been cleared from the more populated areas of the division TAOR, there has been a growing tendency of local force units to break up as tactical entities and operate in smaller groups in a nearby village.

4. BASE CAMPS: a. For both main force and local force units, base camps are essential for survival. Deeply rooted in Communist doctrine is the importance of a "secure base area" for guerrilla operations. The local force units tend to place reliance on numerous small base camps dispersed throughout their areas of operations. In BINH DUONG Province, those wooded areas which remain, conceal at least one small circular entrenchment with associated bunkers and tunnels, and each local force unit attempts to maintain at least one elaborately fortified refuge; larger units have a tunnel complex in which their hospital and headquarters are located. Some of these tunnels are more than 20 years old, and many are hundreds of meters in length. Local forces base camps are usually extensively booby trapped and often protected by punji pits. Main force base camps are usually not so well guarded by mines; they are, of course, larger, and frequently include training facilities, such as rifle ranges and classrooms. Main force units with pre-stocked base camps throughout their area of operations may shift their forces as the

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situation dictates, either for offensive or for defensive reasons. Because of jungle clearing operations, local force units have lost some of their ability to mass and shift forces.

b. Any defended Viet Cong base camp presents a formidable problem to the attacker. One local force squad has been known to withstand assault by two US infantry companies, and even a VC sniper or two, firing from within a mined camp, can inflict numerous casualties on a maneuvering force. Obliteration of local base camps and surrounding jungles using bulldozers has unquestionably been effective. However, our attempts to demolish base camps, using explosives, have been comparatively unsuccessful. Evidence suggests that the enemy soon re-enters and restores partially damaged base camps unless constant patrolling or other US counter-action prevents such restoration.

5. COMMUNICATION-LIAISON ROUTES: The military organization of the enemy is patterned after the cellular organization of the Communist Party. General dissemination of combat intelligence and even information on Viet Cong dispositions is rare; leaders are discouraged from inquiring into situations beyond their own unit and area of operation. Accordingly, fixed communication-liaison routes assume great importance to the Viet Cong units moving from one zone to another, since they must usually follow an established chain of base camps using a series of guides to pass from one area to the other. Supply parties and messengers follow the same routes; frequent "cut-outs" and transfer points are prescribed. US interdiction of such routes invariably causes confusion and dismay.

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6. VC ATTACKS: It is important to appreciate that all enemy military doctrine is couched in offensive terminology. Viet Cong "counter sweep" operations -- the posture the Viet Cong assume to defend against large search and destroy operations -- are described in their orders and other documents in terms of attacks by small elements to conduct harassing counter-attacks with mortars, rifle grenades, claymores, and other mines as the situation permits. This tactic is intended to maintain close contact with our forces, thus reducing vulnerability to our fires. Counter sweeps also visualize the gradual intensification of harassing actions up to and including all out attacks upon our forces once they appear fatigued or depleted, and their strengths and vulnerabilities have been accurately appraised. The terminology "attack" embraces any means of producing casualties among allied forces, including setting pressure mines in the road. Mortar attacks on US bases, both artillery field positions and our permanent bases, is a preferred Viet Cong mode of offensive action. A large scale meeting engagement is rare, but there have been several instances of a Viet Cong force engaging, by what appeared to be an impromptu ambush or counter-sweep, a US rifle company or a battalion minus patrolling in the jungle. The Viet Cong prefer better odds and more carefully reconnoitered and planned operations. One favored form is the regimental ambush of a vehicular column on a road -- a tactic to which the 9th Light Infantry Division resorted three times in the course of two months in the summer of 1966. Another preference is a regimental assault

upon a CIDG defensive position. Post-battle analysis suggests that the enemy plans his maneuver basically on terrain information, that is, knowing we were occupying a position in a given clearing, he maneuvered into position to attack the clearing. However, usually his attack was preceded by ground reconnaissance and probes designed to single out locations of our automatic weapons, and identify weak points in our defense. Invariably, his attacks were preceded by intense mortaring and numerous volleys from direct fire weapons. His assault, when it was launched, was delivered over a wide front, but he concentrated a large mass of his infantry in considerable depth upon one small sector of our position in an effort to penetrate at that point. A number of these large scale attacks were launched in the early morning hours as though the attackers expected to capitalize upon the first daylight during the latter stages of their assault when they had penetrated our position. All such attacks during recent months have occurred between midnight and 0200 hours. The assault itself was intense and aggressively pressed, with heavy reliance being placed on hand grenades, RPG's and automatic weapons. All these attacks were markedly unsuccessful; enemy initiated ground attacks were the greatest single source of enemy losses over the past year.

TABLE I

PRINCIPAL VIET CONG FORCES 1ST INFANTRY DIVISION TAOI

<u>MAIN FORCES</u>	<u>AREA OF OPERATIONS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
9th VC Division 271st VC Regiment 272d VC Regiment 273d VC Regiment	War Zones C and D	A highly mobile light infantry division which normally conducts regimental-size operations. Oldest VC division in the III Corps Tactical Zone, this division has been the 1st Infantry Division's primary opponent.
7th NVA Division 141st NVA Regiment 165th NVA Regiment 101st NVA Regiment	PHUOC LONG and BINH LONG Provinces, War Zone C	Elements of this division entered the Corps Tactical Zone in 1965. It is believed the division was formed during 1966. Ridden with disease, this unit is only just beginning to be a combat effective unit. Several engagements have occurred in late 1967.
PHU LOI Battalion	BINH DUONG Province	A well trained, high morale provincial battalion. The 1st Infantry Division has had frequent contacts with this battalion. It is the principal local force battalion in the division area.
<u>LOCAL FORCES</u>		
3 Bn/165A C61 Company C62 Company C63 Company C64 Company C301 Company C300 DONG NAI Platoon C302 TAN UYEN Platoon C303 Company	DI AN District South BEN CAT District CHAU THANH District LAI THIEU District DAU TIENG District PHU GIAO District TAN UYEN District TAN UYEN District PHU GIAO District	Viet Cong district companies which vary in strength from 50 to 120 men. These companies are armed with mixed weapons. Their combat effectiveness varies from the highly proficient with high morale to those which are combat ineffective in other than platoon



TABLE I (Continued)

<u>LOCAL FORCES</u>	<u>AREA OF OPERATIONS</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
G270	PHUOC LONG Province	level operations. These
G271	PHUOC LONG Province	companies operate within their
G272	PHUOC LONG Province	districts and reinforce the
G273	PHUOC LONG Province	hamlet and village guerrillas.
K127	PHUOC BINH District	
K440	DUC PHONG District	
K460	DON LUAN District	
G45	CHON THANH District	
G55	AN LOC District	
G65	LOC NINH District	
DI AN Platoon	DI AN District	

POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONREMARKS

COSVN	Political and military headquarters directing all military and political elements of the Viet Cong effort in the majority of South Vietnam.
Military Region I	Subordinate to COSVN. Controls and directs VC activity in all of the III Corps area except SAIGON, BINH TUY, and PHUOC LONG areas.
Military Region IV	Controls VC activity, political and military, in SAIGON and its surrounding districts.
Military Region 10	New region in two northernmost provinces of III Corps area -- BINH LONG and PHUOC LONG -- which is a training and recuperation base for infiltrating units. Most active VC area in the III Corps area in the past six months for major units.

# BIG RED ONE BATTLE PRINCIPLES

1. INFANTRY, ARMOR, AND ARMY AVIATION FIND THE ENEMY.
2. AIR AND ARTILLERY KILL THE ENEMY.
3. BATTALION COMMANDERS MUST KNOW UNIT LOCATIONS (WITHIN 10 METERS)  
AT ALL TIMES.
4. KEEP PLANS AND SCHEMES OF MANEUVER SIMPLE.
5. PUT YOUR BACK TO A LANDING ZONE.
6. FIGHTING POSITIONS ARE DEEP, PROPERLY SITED, CAMOUFLAGED, HAVE  
FULL OVERHEAD COVER AND A FRONTAL PROTECTIVE BERM.

## CHAPTER 2

### OFFENSE

1. AXIOMS: a. Do not bunch up. No infantry force of any size ever congregates together; close grouping invites a claymore and multiple casualties. Each leader at every level extends his formations to the maximum consistent with control; distances man-to-man, and element to element, should be in constant tension with the leader's ability to maintain control.

b. Scouts out. No infantry force of any size moves without scouts out. At lead fireteam level, this means splitting into scout and overwatch elements; at squad level, leading with a fireteam; at higher levels, it means cloverleaf patrolling.

c. Firepower before maneuver. No maneuver is undertaken without covering artillery and/or air. Infantry finds the enemy, and with supporting firepower destroys him.

2. ORGANIZATION FOR COMBAT: a. No detail of the individual soldier's equipment should escape command attention. The overlaid soldier is prone to overheating, and stays prone under fire. For example, careful planning for individual military loads can be frustrated by the soldier's tendency to carry ration supplements, cameras, and other impediments; or white insect repellent bottles or cigarette packs in his helmet band can violate otherwise good camouflage discipline.

b. Command attention to unit equipment is even more important.

For example, the company commander who elects to leave all his mortars fails to appreciate that it is always possible to carry one to protect the NDP. The battalion commander who counts on helicopter resupply for pioneer tools is vulnerable to being trapped in dense jungle without even an emergency LZ. No battalion or company commander, artillery liaison officer, or forward observer should advance from one NDP to another without carrying a 292 antenna for his radio.

c. Ammunition load per person, and ammunition packaging is especially critical. Speed in opening fire is an important consideration, but of overriding concern should be a sustained high volume of fire. Overloaded, poorly protected rifle magazines invite stoppages. Machine gun belts carried around necks assure stoppages. Except for a short starter belt (25 rounds) carried in the gun at half load, all machine gun ammunition will be carried in original, unopened boxes. Seven to ten magazines per rifle, 800 to 1000 rounds per machine gun, 24 to 30 rounds per M79 should be a minimum load for an advance to contact. Emergency resupply in the form of company loads of ammunition in helicopter sling loads should be in readiness.

d. The organization and employment of command groups deserves thorough preplanning. At battalion level, constant FM radio communications with brigade is of paramount importance; movement of the CP in echelons is normally essential except for brief periods when the command is airborne. An airborne CP capability is virtually always essential. At company level, it is normally desirable to advance with the command

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group split into two sections, separated for survivability, with the executive officer or first sergeant in one, and the CO in the other; both groups should possess radios and the ability to control air and artillery support, resupply, and medical evacuation.

e. A well-rehearsed unit SOP will remove from the command net much cluttered traffic concerning resupply and evacuation, relegating such messages to the logistic net by subordinates of the combat leaders. The unit whose commanders must employ command radios for obtaining combat service support is severely handicapped in fire and maneuver.

f. Ground-to-air signal devices--smoke grenades and air panels--are critical to employment of firepower. Two smoke grenades per man should be minimum; more should be carried on occasion. Additionally, a company packet of colored smoke grenades should be on hand at the battalion forward command post for lowering or dropping from the LOH if required.

3. MOVEMENT TO CONTACT: a. Infantry maneuvers in the jungle to find the enemy. The underlying purposes of infantry security measures are to prevent the units' thrusting into the killing zone of an enemy defense or ambush more than a fireteam; to detect the presence of the enemy before he becomes aware of us; and, above all, to locate the enemy so that our firepower can destroy him. The basic maneuver is the "clover-leaf", so called from the pattern of patrols thrown out in advance of

and to the flanks and rear of advancing units. Every unit moving must use the cloverleaf maneuver, applying the overwatch technique in moving to contact.

b. "Overwatch" is one unit always in a position to immediately return fire while the other unit is moving. (Example: One fire team moving, the other one in a firing position "overwatching" the advancing fireteam. The advancing team halts and takes up a firing position, the trailing team moves forward until it can take up a position to overwatch.)

c. Cloverleaf. Figure 1. The first unit to move will be the lead squad of the lead platoon. This squad will move out using the bounding overwatch. The bounding overwatch is used when contact is imminent. One fireteam will always be in firing position while the other advances. The front advancing fireteam will use overwatch within the fireteam (half moving and half overwatching). The forward movement is by bounds. This type of movement allows the minimum number of men to become engaged by the same source of firepower at once, and provides someone to return fire immediately. When this squad has moved 100 to 200 meters, depending on the terrain, the squad leader will set up a defensive perimeter and send his fireteams, one at a time, to the flanks in a cloverleaf. The cloverleafing fireteam will advance using the overwatch within the fireteam (half moving and half in a position overwatching). The other fireteam will always be overwatching. When this action is completed, the squad leader will call the platoon leader

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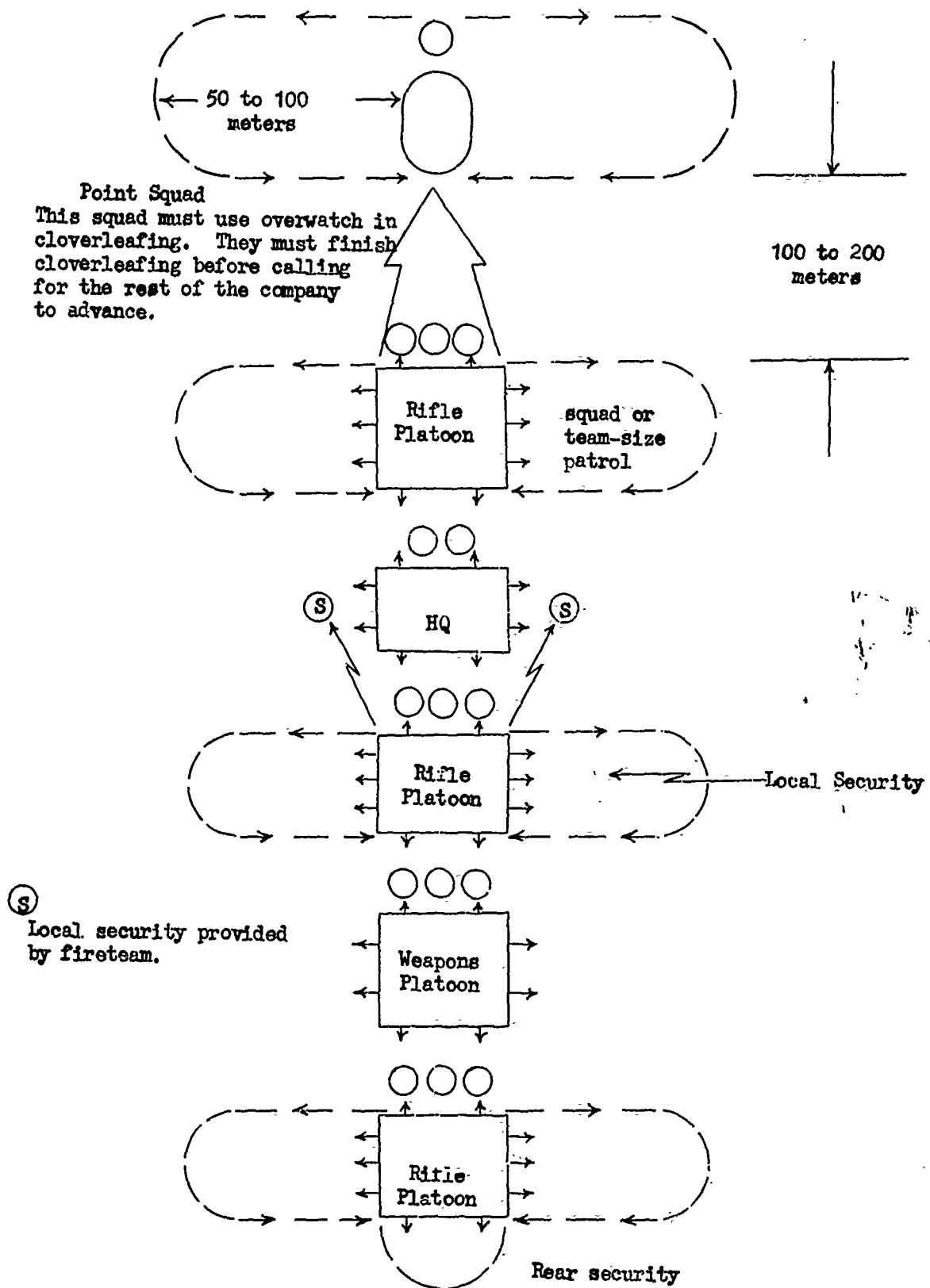


Figure 1. Rifle company cloverleafing in advance to contact.

who will displace the platoon forward, followed by the company, until contact is made with the point. As soon as contact is made with the point, it will move out again repeating the same steps. The company will, upon closing on the point squad, set out security immediately and then send patrols out to the flanks. (Each rifle platoon will send a patrol to both flanks.) The patrols will go out, depending on terrain, no less than 40 meters. The rear platoon will, in addition to cloverleafing, send security to the rear. The platoon directly behind the company HQ group should send security to secure the command group. When all cloverleaf patrols have returned, the company commander must be notified so that he can move the company forward upon call from the point element. This type of movement is slow and requires practice, good control and lots of patience; however, time and again, units using the cloverleaf have scouted out the enemy, destroyed him by fire, and then maneuvered in upon his positions without serious casualties. The cloverleaf method is slow. The company depicted (Figure 1) will cover only about 2000 meters, out and return by a different route, in eight hours. Some commanders who have elected to advance otherwise have taken heavy casualties in their lead platoon and suffered more attempting to extricate them. It is difficult to outline the application of the cloverleaf principle which would fit every situation. The preceding example is merely illustrative. Occasions will arise when greater speed of movement will be dictated by mission, terrain, or enemy situation. The cloverleaf principle holds that the rifle company will



advance preceded by patrols in all directions. Successful employment of the cloverleaf principle requires intense practice: sand tables or chalk drills at platoon and company level, and practical exercises on terrain, as often as possible. Success also requires patience of commanders at battalion level and above, for they must accept the inherently slower pace of advance which adherence to the cloverleaf principle demands.

4. ACTIONS UPON CONTACT: Enemy contact in the jungle usually occurs at point blank range; frequently the enemy will have snipers in trees and enjoy advantages of fortifications, communication trenches, and minefields to his front and flanks. It is imperative that upon contact teamwork at all echelons accomplishes the following:

a. Company in contact: High volume of fire in direction of enemy, not neglecting trees. Immediately mark most advanced elements and flanks with smoke. Report direction (magnetic azimuth) to enemy, and range from one marking. Initiate artillery fires on enemy at point of contact. Withdraw forward elements to positions sufficiently to bring artillery fire on the point of contact (accomplished by movement by bounds as the artillery is adjusted). Refuse the units' flanks by positioning of forces and (later) by use of supporting artillery, gunships and air. Report estimated enemy strength, equipment, and direction of withdrawal (if any).

b. Battalion commander: Immediately request gunships, FAC, airstrikes, and artillery observer. Locate precisely by map grid the point of contact, if company FO has not done so. Alert reserves, medical evacuation aviation, and emergency resupply. Control air strikes if

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company commander is not in position to do so.

c. Commanders at all echelons: Aggressive instinct to flank the enemy position must be curbed. Once the enemy position is established, all commanders will bring all available fires to bear on the enemy. Each commander from company on up must be capable of employing air and artillery, be quick to initiate action to bring each into play, and practiced in using the channels of communication for each. The most crucial information which the unit in contact must supply is the direction in which the enemy is positioned or withdrawing. Based on this sensing, commanders at higher echelons deliver fires to destroy the enemy, block the avenue of enemy withdrawal or reinforcement. Fires are shifted progressively outward from the point of contact. They are discontinued only when, in the judgment of the battalion or brigade commander, the fires are no longer beneficial. The initiation of a heavy volume of artillery fire can be facilitated by "marching" fires in advance of and/or to the flanks of the unit as it moves to contact. Fire should be sustained by keeping the artillery shooting despite use of air in the target areas. Upon contact, time should not be wasted on prolonged attempts to fix precise targets. It is imperative that supporting fires be initiated immediately. They can be initiated beyond the point of contact and subsequently adjusted in toward the unit as the situation clarifies. Battalion and brigade commanders must continually keep informed of the location of friendly fire support bases, and periodically "war game" the simultaneous employment of air, gunships and artillery in the event of

contact. As a rule, artillery should never be cut off to facilitate delivery of air; rather, it should be shifted front or flank nearest the firing battery to augment the air. Constantly adjusted air-artillery fire control lines can be employed. Experience confirms that once artillery is cut off in favor of air, excessive time is lost in resuming fire. Experience also underscores the importance of the battalion commander choosing correctly among the relative advantages of air and artillery in each given situation. In general, air should be used against enemy base camps, since hard bombs or napalm are required to destroy these positions. Napalm, CBU and 20mm are fine close support weapons, but should always be delivered parallel to the friendly front or flanks. CBU is deadly against the enemy outside fortifications, and should also be delivered parallel to friendly locations. Bombs are a good answer to VC emplacements. Light artillery is generally ineffective against fortifications, but is a fine, high volume antipersonnel weapon capable of achieving local fire superiority. Mortars are normally not used in close support of maneuvering friendly forces. Heavy artillery must be echeloned in depth from friendly troops, and can effectively be used to destroy VC fortifications; mixed fuse quick and fuse delay should be requested. The mastery of fire control and fire coordination is the most important challenge faced by battalion and brigade commanders in Vietnam. Delegation of fire coordination is impossible; only the commander or the S3 has the feel for the fire required.

5. FOLLOW-UP TO FIREPOWER: When in the judgment of the commanders concerned, fires on the enemy have been effective, the advance will be resumed. Security to front and flanks is restored, and the unit enters the enemy positions. At this time, the mission of the infantry is a thorough search of the battlefield. The Viet Cong are adroit at concealing personnel, arms, documents, and other valuables, and care and imagination are necessary for the searchers to ferret out the fruits of victory. Prisoners are especially valuable in this conflict, and pains should be taken to capture, safeguard, and treat medically, any VC who survive our bombardment. Any documents, no matter how unimportant they might appear to be, should be properly tagged and evacuated. It should be a matter of pride to any infantry unit that an area it has searched is left devoid of intelligence.

6. ACTIONS AT A VC BASE CAMP: Battalion and company sized search and destroy operations are normally conducted to systematically locate and destroy VC base camps and supply caches. Normally, a base camp location can be accurately predicted by a good map reconnaissance. Dense undergrowth or heavy bamboo, seemingly inaccessible terrain and a readily available water supply indicate a possible base camp location. Certain unmistakable signs in the jungle also indicate their presence. Latrines, well-used trails converging on a central area, signs of woodcutting, an increased number of booby traps, and engagement by snipers or stay-behind forces are some of these signs. When a base camp is encountered, it will normally be found by the point fireteam or one of the fireteams on a

cloverleaf from the main body. These forces, if undiscovered, should return to the main body and air should be immediately brought to bear on the base camp. If the lead element is brought under fire, air and artillery should be used in both a blocking and destruction role. After the enemy fires are neutralized, the infantry must search and destroy the base camp. The unit is organized into three groups to accomplish this mission. The security element, using overwatch, moves around the flanks of the base camp and establishes flank security. A hunter-killer element (which works one bunker at a time) is then sent through with the specific purpose of systematically destroying the base camp and killing any personnel found in it. A third element initially provides rear security and then moves through collecting all items of intelligence value. All elements must consistently use the bounding overwatch at all levels while in or around the base camp. The unit must have sufficient grenades, demolitions and pioneer tools in order to effectively destroy the base camp. All personnel must be constantly alert for signs of supply caches, especially around the outer fringes of the base camp. Dispersion, proper use of the overwatch principle and alertness are the prime ingredients for success in this type of operation.

7. CROSSING OF WATER OBSTACLES: A water obstacle is, in addition to being an obstacle to movement, a danger area. When a water obstacle is going to be encountered, units will carry sufficient nylon rope to effect river crossings. All personnel in the unit will carry an aluminum snap link. When confronted by a water obstacle, security must be positioned

to the flanks and rear prior to crossing. The first personnel to cross must be good swimmers. They carry the nylon rope (safety line) and are overwatched from the near bank. When they reach the far bank, the safety line is secured and personnel take up frontal and flank security positions. The remainder of the main body then crosses in groups of two or three. They snap the aluminum snap link through their suspenders and then to the safety line. Upon completing the crossing, they become part of the security which continues to radiate outward. The last elements across should be capable swimmers and bring the safety line across with them. Non-swimmers can be secured to the safety line by snap link and cross in a similar fashion as other personnel. Those with an avid fear of water can be provided with an expedient life preserver made from five or six empty canteens attached to a pistol belt or a poncho filled with foliage and rolled. Commanders must remember that water obstacles are likely ambush sites. Security on both the enemy and friendly sides is imperative.

8. ROAD CLEARING OPERATIONS: a. Offensive operations frequently involve securing a road for use as an MSR. In clearing a road, infantry commanders should commence operations by passing troops in "V" formation down the road, with the opening of the "V" in the direction of advance. The ends of the wings echeloned forward and outward from the road should be at least 100 meters away from the ditchline, and the soldiers in the formation should be carefully instructed to search for wires and other

signs of command detonated mines or claymores.

b. The three minesweep teams should be located at the point of the "V" about two-hundred meters behind the lead elements of the wings. The three sweep teams are comprised of a searcher, a sweeper, and a prober. These teams move in echelon approximately 20-30 meters apart. All personnel in the team wear flak jackets.

(1) SEARCHER: The searcher moving approximately 20-30 meters ahead of the sweeper in the point of the "V" looks for disturbances in the surface of the road, wires, battery pouches, or anything else that might appear to be unusual. Experience has established that the best mine detector in the Army inventory is the individual soldier with a keen eye and a sharp mind.

(2) SWEEPER: The sweeper moves 20-30 meters behind the searcher with a mine detector to locate buried mines. When a suspicious reading is registered, he points out the area to the prober and then continues. If he gets another reading, he stops until the prober finishes checking the previous sensing.

(3) PROBER: The prober follows 5-10 meters behind the sweeper. When the sweeper has a suspicious reading, the prober moves up to the location pointed out by the sweeper, removes excess equipment, and probes with a bayonet to determine what the object is. If it proves to be a mine, it is blown in place. At no time should more than two individuals gather around an object to investigate.

c. Once the initial clearing patrol moves down the road, the

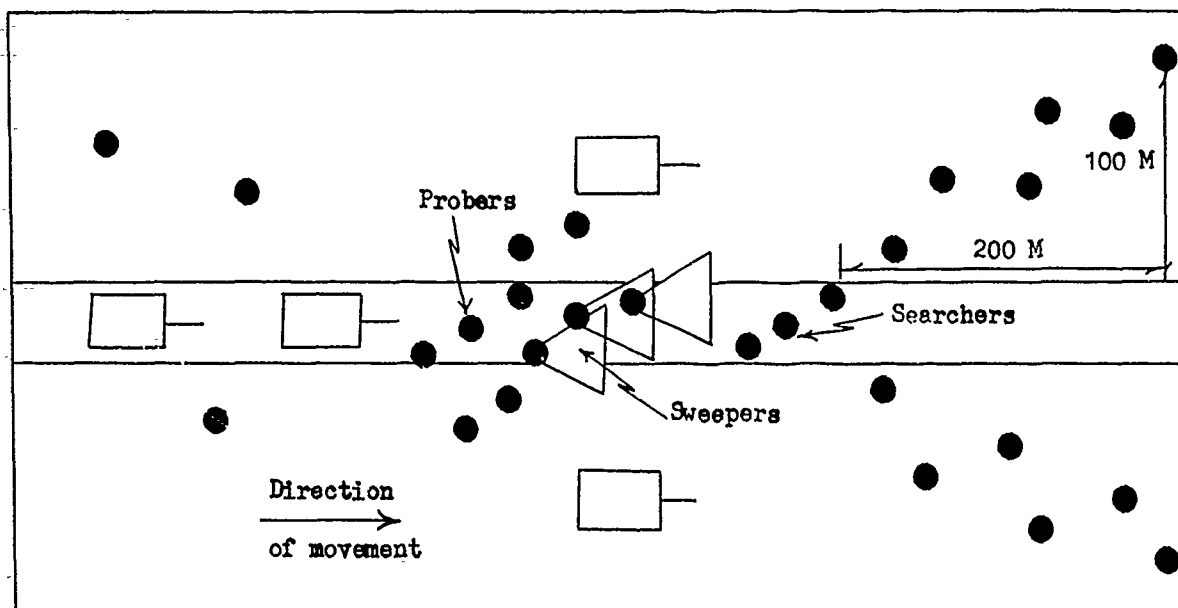


Figure 2. "V" formation for road clearing operations.

road must be secured against remaining and snipers. Troops or armor assigned the securing mission must penetrate into the vegetation alongside the road to beyond the limits of visibility, and must patrol actively. Above all, troops engaged in road clearing must remain alert and dispersed at all times; in any other posture, they court multiple casualties from claymores or other command detonated mines.

9. TRAINING: a. No unit should move outside a secured, permanent base camp except in tactical formation. Leaders at every level must regard every move as training, and none must hesitate to stop a maneuver if it is being done incorrectly.

b. Musketry for infantry units should be practiced on every opportunity. As a minimum, riflemen should be required to fire through



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a basic load at maximum rate to teach them the meaning of volume of fire, and to give them a feel for their firepower. Use of tracer ammunition; snap shooting at surprise targets, night firing, and cross-training on the machine gun and grenade launcher is also helpful, and cannot be repeated often enough. Fireteam and squads must be permitted to conduct field firing as a team.

c. After action critiques are superb training, and help significantly in developing sound SOP.

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## CHAPTER 3

### DEFENSE

1. TEAMWORK: The 1st Division has a well-earned reputation for building sound defenses, and fighting from them magnificently. Reputation alone, however, is not enough to stop a Viet Cong assault. Successful defense is accomplished by combining sound planning, diligent preparation, vigorous execution, and aggressive supervision at every echelon of command. A good defense hinges on the following:

- a. The rifleman; whose shovel, muscle, weapon, and courage form the foundation on which the position is built.
- b. The NCO; whose know-how shapes and ties the position together and who leads the defenders at the decisive time.
- c. The company officer; who lays out the position, and controls the infantry weapons.
- d. The battalion commander; who selects key weapons positions, coordinates artillery and air support, and commands the fight on the ground.
- e. The brigade commander; who supervises the preparation of the defensive position, and directs fires and exploiting maneuver as well as the commitment of rapid reaction forces.

2. US COUNTER TO ENEMY ATTACK: The Viet Cong and their NVA counterparts are a tough and wily foe, dedicated to their cause and bent on the destruction of US forces. They are capable of detailed planning

and exactness in the implementation of their plan. Notwithstanding this, their inability to vary from a plan, once execution of it has been initiated, compels them to set a pattern in their attack. Normally, a VC assault is preceded by several probes of the perimeter in an effort to delineate our positions, locate key weapons and identify any weak spots in the defense. Mortars and recoilless rifles are then positioned well forward in order to neutralize positions found during the probes. The assault is normally led by assault infantry, firing automatic weapons from the hip, and supplemented by RPG gunners and grenadiers. This assault follows an intense preparation by indirect and direct fire weapons. Our defenses are designed to frustrate this type of attack. Table II outlines our method of accomplishing this end. (See page 32.)

3. FIGHTING POSITIONS: The Big Red One fighting positions adhere to the following principles:

- a. A frontal berm to deflect rounds from direct fire weapons.
- b. Forty-five degree firing ports.
- c. Full overhead cover.
- d. Camouflage.
- e. Low silhouette.
- f. Permits "Bee Hive" rounds to be fired without endangering occupants.
- g. Has sleeping quarters dug in directly behind the hole.
- h. Is continuously improved as long as the position is occupied.

4. SITE SELECTION: Selection of the proper site for an individual

TABLE II

VC ATTACK AND US COUNTER

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| (1) Reconnaissance: probes, harassment, pre-attack targeting   | (1) Counter-recon security screen:<br>LP & OP's trip flares and claymores<br>Camouflaged positions<br>Fire discipline                                       |
| (2) Indirect fire: mortars, recoilless rifles, rifle grenades  | (2) Overhead cover  |
| (3) Direct fire: recoilless rifles, RPG, MG, claymores   | (3) Camouflaged positions<br>Low silhouettes<br>Full frontal berms  |
| (4) Frontal assault: SMG, RPG's, claymores and grenades; concentrated infantry                               | (4) Wire and other obstacles<br>Trip flares<br>Claymores<br>Full Frontal berms<br>Flanking, grazing fire<br>Positions in depth<br>Large caliber direct fire |
| (5) Infiltration assault: (Enemy attempts to crawl into battle position under cover of heavy mortar barrage) | (5) On suspicion that such a tactic is being used, infantry will intensify M79 rate of fire to cover all approaches   |

position is extremely important. A poor choice leads to inability to accomplish the assigned mission and unnecessary labor for the individual soldier. Leaders should position their automatic weapons first, at locations where the maximum advantage can be taken of grazing fire. Individual rifle positions should be emplaced around the automatic weapons, to supplement their fires, protect them and add depth to the defense. Depth is provided by displacing positions 10 to 50 meters from one another from front to rear. (See Figure 3) Each front hole is supported by a rear hole so that the front hole can be covered by fire. Maximum advantage must be taken of natural cover and concealment. Leaders, when selecting positions, must visualize how they are going to defend the assigned sector. The configuration of the terrain will determine the proper emplacement of assigned weapons. Leaders must walk the assigned sector, identify likely avenues of approach, and emplace their weapons to deny these approaches to the enemy. The commander should avoid pushing the defensive perimeter out to the treeline whenever possible. Well constructed positions in the open with listening posts in the treeline take maximum advantage of available fields of fire and are less vulnerable to tree bursts from indirect fire weapons. The perimeter should be formed in depth, with interlocking fires and maximum mutual support from flanking fires among individual positions. Each soldier must know his own field of fire and that of supporting positions. Leaders must know this information about all positions in their assigned sector in addition to the planned mortar and artillery concentrations

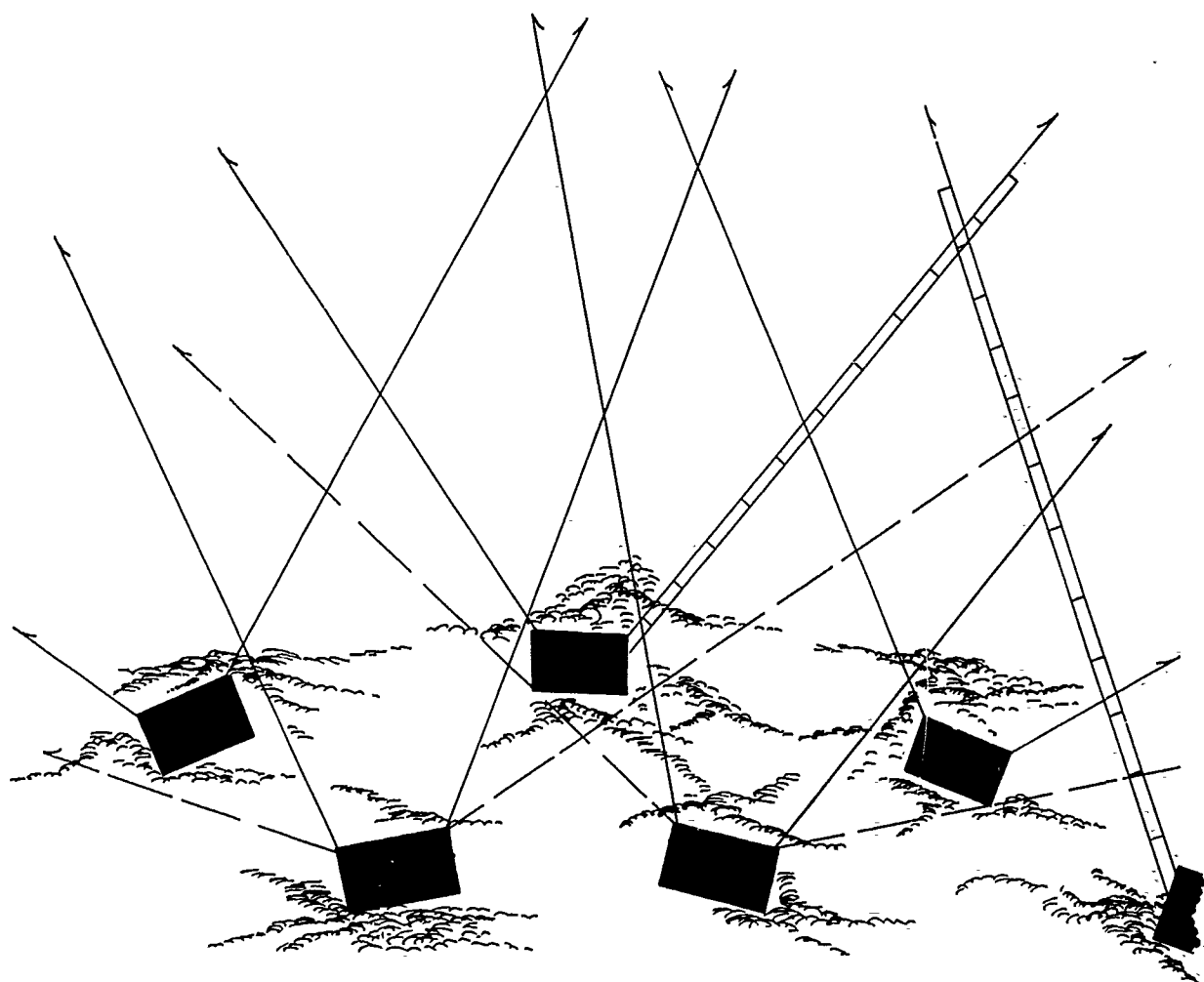


Figure 3. Fighting positions with mutually supporting fires.

(including Bee Hive) which support the sector. A unit SOP should be established for the defense and followed. This SOP should provide for checks by all elements in the chain of command to insure compliance with orders.

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5. SEQUENCE OF WORK:

a. Select the site: The primary consideration must be given to fields of fire. Natural cover and concealment is also important. A position behind an anthill or a large tree has built in frontal protection. FPL's must be walked to check the selected position and to locate dead space.

b. Plan camouflage: Blend the position into the background. Establish paths for approaching the position so as not to destroy the effect of the camouflage.

c. Begin digging: Spoil should be thrown to the front to begin a berm which is progressively packed, formed and apertured.

d. Clear fields of fire: Fields of fire must be wide enough and low enough to enable the soldier to observe his entire sector from the fighting position.

e. Complete walking the FPL's and make range cards.

f. Emplace claymores and trip flares. A minimum of one claymore per occupant of the position should be used. They should be emplaced in depth and their killing zones interlocked wherever possible. Trip flares out to extended distances (500-600 meters) provide early warning.

g. Emplace wire: Use a triple standard concertina fence as protective wire and emplace tactical wire along the friendly side of each FPL. Use a band of trip flares in conjunction with the wire. Wire is to be used when a position is to be occupied two or more nights.

h. Continue to improve the hole: Stock it with ammunition and provide storage niches.

i. Provide overhead cover: Use local materials wherever possible. When the area is devoid of natural materials, use engineer stakes.

j. Complete camouflage.

k. Camouflage tents and paths.

l. Dig an entrance trench and supplementary holes. Camouflage them.

m. Dig commo trenches and reserve positions. Camouflage will be replaced as needed and the berm improved.

n. Sleeping positions will be dug directly to the rear of the fighting position. They will be dug deep enough to enable a man, lying on his side on an air mattress, to be below ground level. If a high water table is encountered, the sleeping quarters may be built up with sandbags. They should never be higher than the fighting position. Dummy and alternate positions will be prepared as time permits.

6. ARMOR IN THE DEFENSE: Armored vehicles will not be positioned in their night defense sites, or along the trace of infantry fighting positions during daylight hours. To do so destroys much of the value of carefully camouflaged fighting positions, and makes enemy reconnaissance easier. Rather, armored vehicles will move to preplanned, prepared positions after dark. When the mission requires that a perimeter be occupied for several days, the location of armored vehicle positions will be changed at least once daily or the vehicle dug in. Perimeters composed of armored vehicles will be organized in depth, avoid a lineal



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or regular circle figuration, and achieve maximum flanking and covering fires for mutual support along the lines previously discussed for infantry fighting positions. On vehicle azimuth indicators for range cards, infra-red equipment, and lights will be fully exploited. Mechanized infantry will fight from holes except for the vehicle driver and the main armament gunner; mechanized infantry APC's will overwatch their squad positions, adding depth to the defense. Armored cavalry fight from their vehicles.

7. CLAYMORES: The claymore mine is an area weapon designed to repel close enemy assault. As a minimum, each defender will have two claymores aimed to clean out his firing sector at hand grenade range -- claymores set out within sight of his aperture, and protected by his fire. Other claymores may be provided each defender on line to supplement his sector. All LP's and OP's should be equipped with a minimum of three claymores. These claymores will be positioned to provide both frontal and flank protection. Caution must be taken in emplacing and storing the claymore. It must be emplaced and aimed in the desired direction, then the cap is inserted into the cap well and the firing wire tied to a stake immediately behind the mine. The dust cover on the firing wire should be closed until the detonator is attached prior to actual firing. The blasting cap will be removed from the claymore if it is removed from the firing positions during the daylight hours. The wire should be wrapped around the blasting caps to further preclude accidental detonation.

8. CONDUCT OF DEFENSE: Our defensive perimeters are built around the positions previously described. Principles of fighting these positions

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are unchanged from those which the US Army used during World War II and Korea. There must be defense in depth, interlocking bands of grazing fire, defensive artillery and mortar concentrations, coverage of dead space in final protective lines, tactical and protective wire (as time permits), trip flares and claymores. When a defensive perimeter is probed, we must not disclose the locations of direct fire weapons, particularly automatic weapons. Rather, LP's fire claymores in the area of the probe, and the line uses indirect fire weapons and M79's initially. Final protective fires are called for only when the position is under assault. The position must be organized in such strength and depth that it can repel the enemy's assault while artillery and airstrikes are brought to bear on him. The commander's plan for conducting defense must provide for:

- a. Withdrawing his security screen altogether, or selectively by quadrant, ahead of enemy probes to free his indirect fire weapons. Normally, the LP's or OP's fire their claymores to cover their withdrawal.
- b. Controlling his fires during probes to avoid revealing the location of his machine guns and other key weapons positions, while delivering 40mm grenades and mortar fires on the enemy's lead elements.
- c. Calling for illumination -- mortar, artillery, and air-dropped flares -- and positioning it to maximum advantage.
- d. Preplanning use of air firepower by predesignating radar-controlled bomb targets, and providing for marking lines at night, e.g.,

vehicle headlights, gasoline flares, strobe lights, or thrown trip flares.

e. Calling for and stopping final protective fires for the whole position or by sector.

f. Moving reserves to positions behind portions of the line under assault to block or to reduce a penetration.

g. Firing "bee hive" ammunition over his lines during enemy assault.

h. Conducting resupply. Stocks should be pushed up into the forward holes as available. Prepackaged company issues of small arms ammunition should be prepared for delivery by helicopter sling load directly onto the position. Battalion packs of medical supplies, and mortar ammunition packs should also be ready. No resupply should be attempted until the enemy's direct fire is suppressed. Precipitous evacuation or resupply leads to needless casualties.

9. ROLE OF BATTALION AND COMPANY COMMANDERS: The senior infantry or armor commander present cannot delegate responsibility for organizing the defense. In particular, the senior commander must control artillery and air support -- the principal Viet Cong killers -- and so much of his other key weapons as may be feasible. Thus, a battalion commander should supervise firing in his artillery defense concentrations daily; a company commander should site all his company machine guns, and plan 81mm mortar fires. The battalion commander should at least check his choices.

10. STERILIZATION OF DEFENSIVE POSITIONS: Any unit leaving an NDP, FSB, or FSPB should insure that the area is left completely devoid of any materials which could be utilized by the Viet Cong. Commanders at

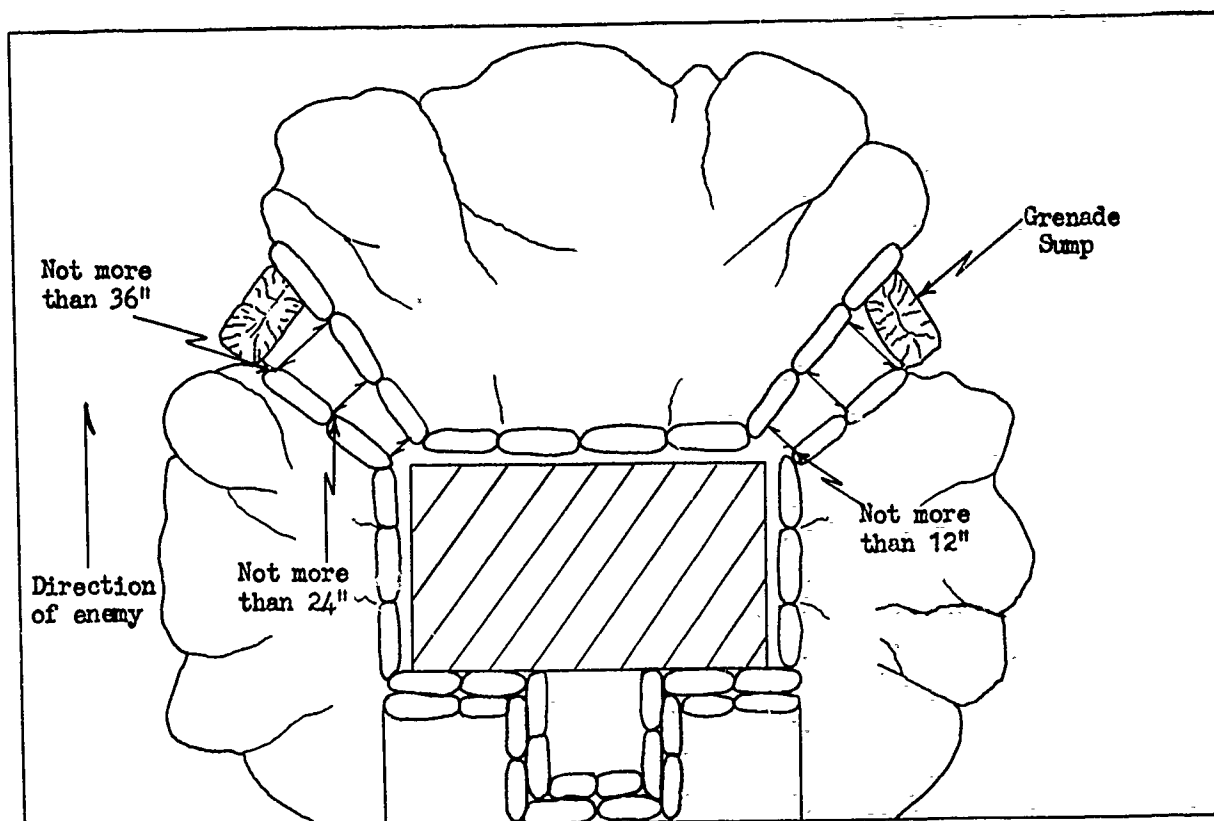


Figure 4. Rifle position, start.

at all echelons should continuously check the position prior to leaving to insure that items of ammunition, communications equipment, etc., are not left behind. Such inconsequential items as PRC-25 batteries, "C" ration cans and undestroyed sandbags simply find their way into VC supply channels, and are used against our forces in later combat actions. A PRC-25 battery which is no longer usable in the radio for transmitting, still retains sufficient power to electronically detonate mines. "C" ration cans, ammunition rods and other discarded metals are frequently

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found as fillers in VC claymores. Only by aggressive checks and double checks can this lucrative source of supply be curtailed. Commanders should insure burning of all waste items daily.

11. CONSTRUCTING RIFLE POSITIONS:

a. Large positions are weak positions. Each rifle position should begin with a rectangular hole as long as the shoulder-to-shoulder length of the men who will fight in it and as wide as a man plus equipment. Spoil should be thrown forward and to the sides to form a sloped, progressively packed berm.

b. The next step is to cut firing apertures at 45 degree angles to the direction of the enemy and deepen the hole, tailoring the depth to each man, and carving elbow rests in the parapet for each rifleman to insure solid elbow-under-the piece firing positions. Apertures should provide a sufficiently wide field of vision so as to enable the defender to command his assigned sector. AR's on bipods should have bipod rest slots cut forward of the parapet to allow the bipod to be withdrawn easily and help keep fires low. The fitting for firing should be undertaken carefully to counter the natural tendency to shoot high at night. This is accomplished by digging each man down so that standing in his hole in a firing position, his piece is level at the correct height for grazing fire, firmly seated and supported, and as close to the ground as his mission permits. (See Figure 5, page 42)

c. Grenade Sump: Grenade sumps will be positioned at the mouth of the firing ports to allow the tops of the firing apertures to protrude

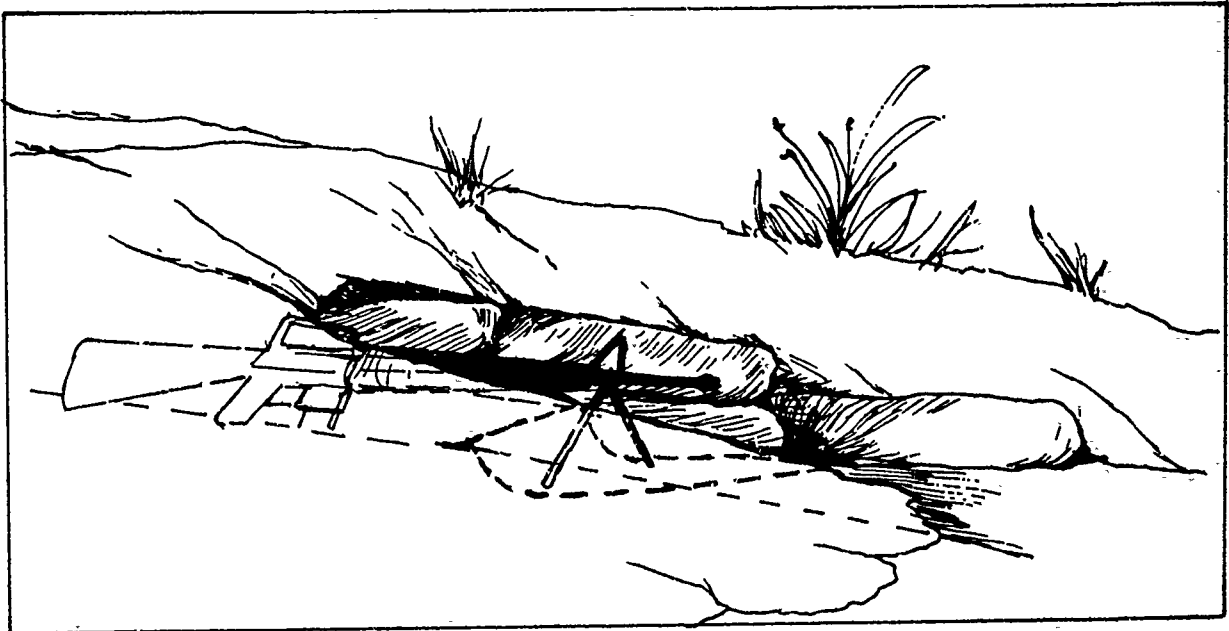


Figure 5. Firing aperture.

over the sump approximately 6 inches. The firer is protected from grenade fragments by having the grenade sump and the chance of a grenade being thrown into the fighting position is greatly reduced. (See Figure 6)

A grenade sump will be dug at a 45 degree angle at the base of the rear wall of the fighting position, under the overwatch step. The depth of this sump should be equal to the length of the entrenching tool. (Figure 7).

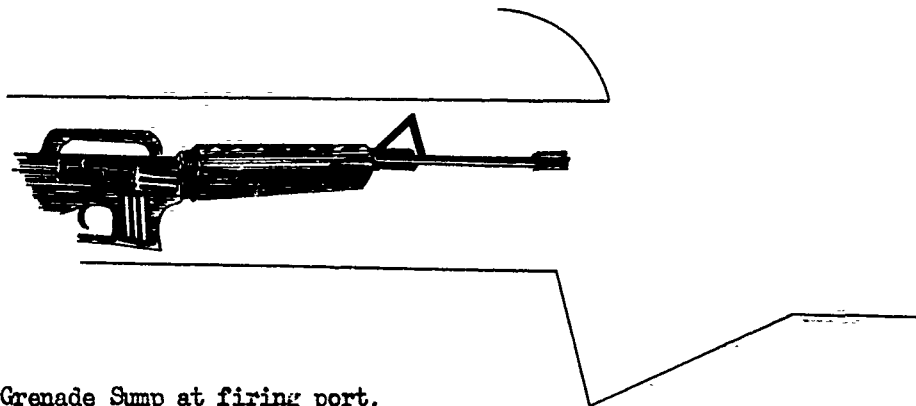


Figure 6. Grenade Sump at firing port.

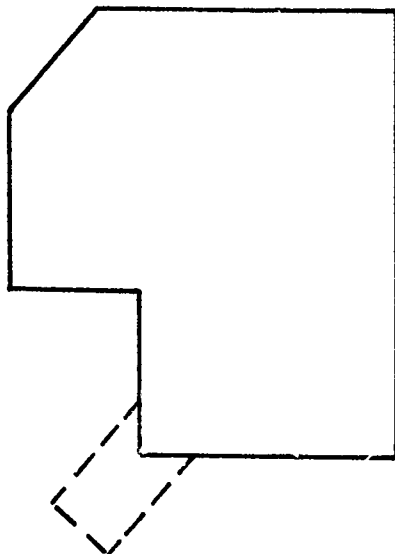


Figure 7. Grenade Sump in fighting position.

d. Overhead cover is then added: Cover can be fabricated from large logs plus sandbags or dirt, or sapling/bamboo mats in three cross-laid laminations plus sandbags or dirt. These should be sturdy enough to take the full weight of a large, combat loaded soldier jumping up and down. Cover will then have as a minimum two layers of sandbags plus 6 to 8 inches of dirt. The unit which habitually carries pioneer tools (including chain saws) is not only ready to defend on order, but also possesses the capability to cut emergency LZ's as required. Full overhead cover is constructed over all positions; full cover cuts vulnerability to air burst and grenades, and lessens prospects of flooding in the event of rain — an important consideration in the monsoon season. Care must be exercised to hold the silhouette of the position as low as

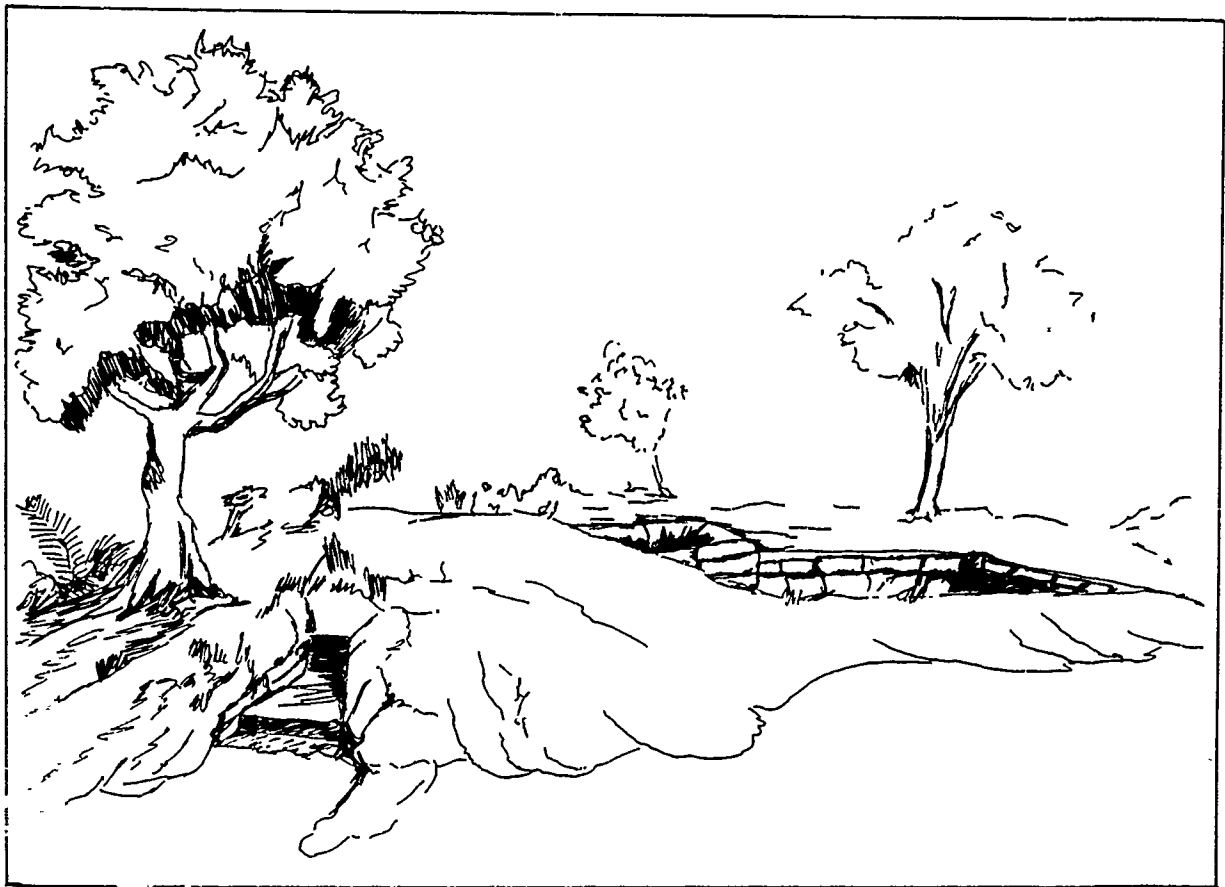


Figure 8. Completed foxhole as viewed from left front with camouflage partially completed, showing grenade sump and sleeping positions.

possible, and the apertures as small as sector of fire permits. The height of the cover is determined by placing the firers in the hole, and the cover adjusted a full inch above their helmets while they take up night firing positions — head high over the sights. Berms and apertures should be extended and sloped forward to cut vertical surfacing, and to hide muzzle flash from the front.

c. Camouflage is added: Preferably, this should be rooted plants and grass sod, calculated to grow naturally in place on the



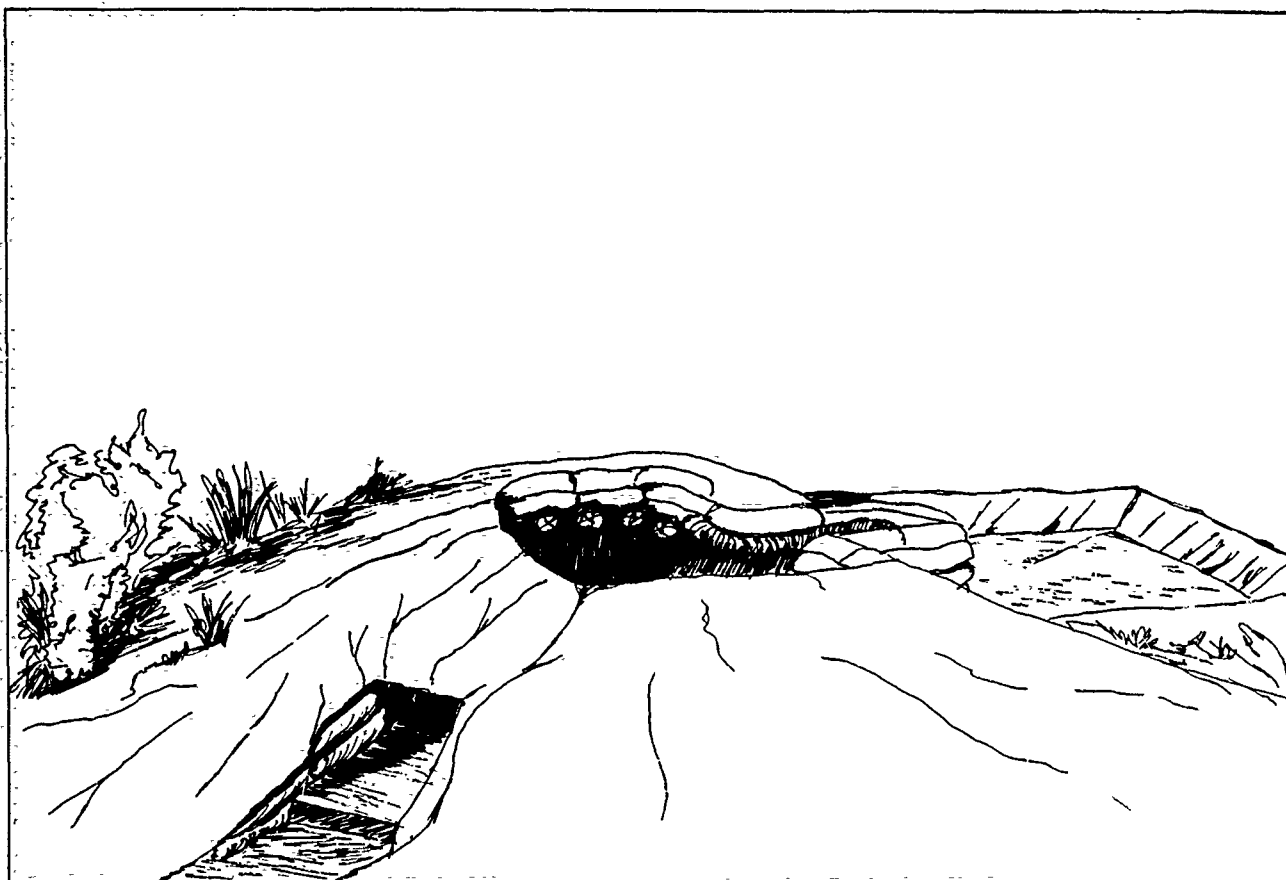


Figure 9. Cross-section view of overhead cover.

position, and to blend fully with the surrounding vegetation. While digging the fighting position, maximum care should be taken to prevent the destruction of natural camouflage growing near the hole, scaling off the sod to a depth that will maintain the roots, and setting it aside to be used for camouflage upon completion of the overhead cover. If the position is sited behind thick shrubbery, slightly higher positions than those normally acceptable can be built; positions dug in from behind

earth clumps or hummocks offer more headroom and more substantial overhead cover.

f. Each position is completed before any thought is given to rest. There is only one reasonably sure defense for the soldier against the mortar attack which may come at any moment--be underground. Hence, the position should provide for each soldier a hole in which to stand erect and fight, with adequate overhead clearance, overhead cover, a berm to the front with proper firing apertures, a berm to the sides, adequate rear protection, and thorough camouflage.

g. A rear entrance must be dug. This rear entry should be an auxiliary, fully open, individual firing position. This enables the soldier to fire M79's and throw grenades in case of attack and gives a protected position from which to observe his sector while on guard. It should be at minimum designed to allow entry into the hole from the rear and covered with a poncho or similar screen to cut down backlighting the firing apertures. Full consideration will be given to protecting defenders from friendly direct fire weapons shooting overhead from the rear in support (including artillery beehive ammunition), and to emergency resupply. The sleeping position should be directly behind the fighting position. Connecting trenches and spider holes may be constructed.

h. If a high water table is encountered, positions may be dug to knee depth and then built up. Regardless of the water level, the same principles of hole construction will apply.

12. CONSTRUCTING MACHINE GUN POSITIONS: The machine gun position is constructed generally following the same guidelines as the rifle position,

except that the hole must be designed around the gun. The first step is to emplace the gun on its final protective line, and walk the latter to check the site. The hole is then traced to place a sturdy firing table with working room for the loader on the left. The machine gun cover should be raised three-fourths open to determine necessary heights inside the hole. (See Figure 10, page 48)

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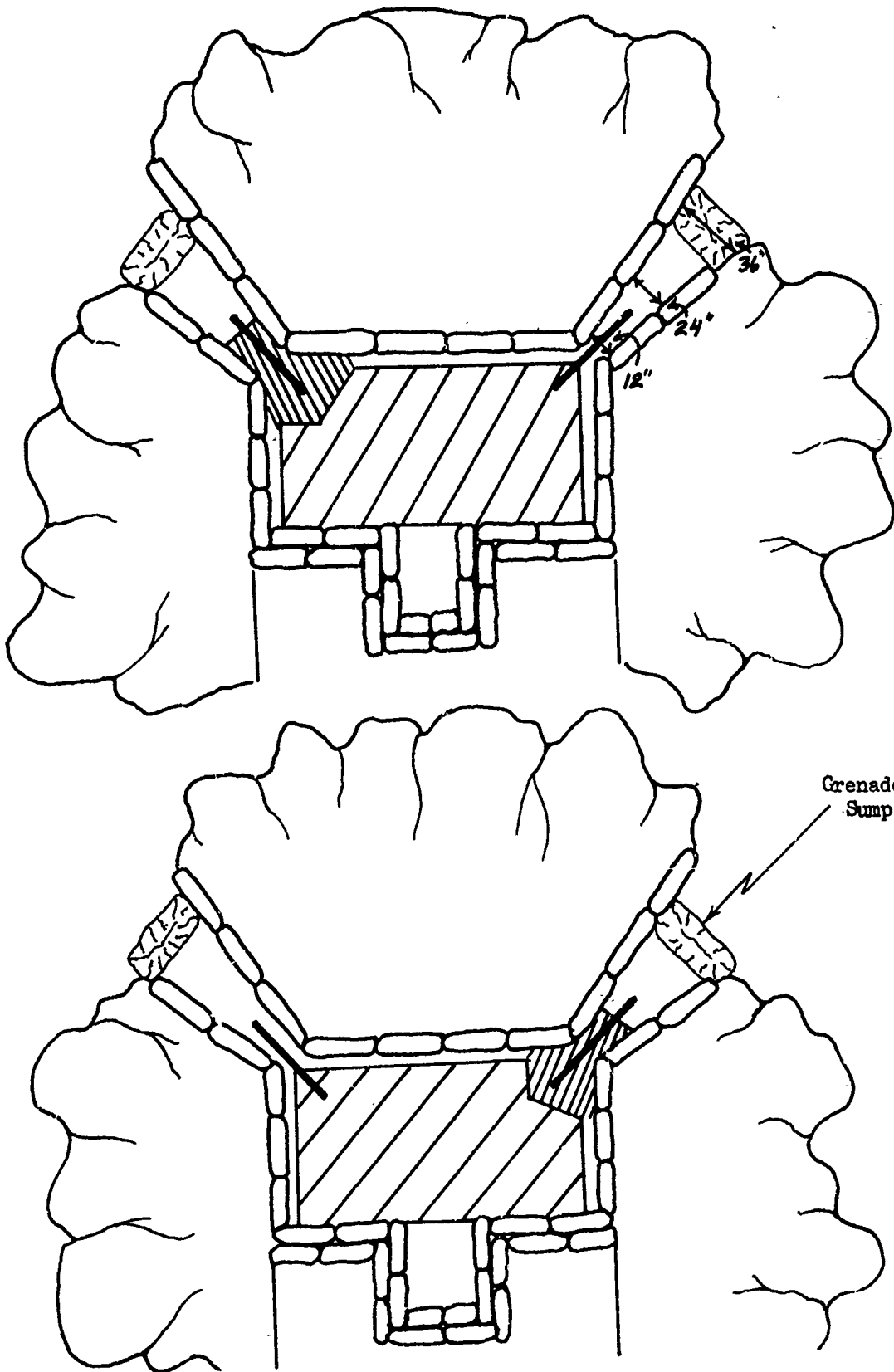


Figure 10. Machine gun position.

## CHAPTER 4

AIRMOBILE OPERATIONS

1. GENERAL: The most frequent method of introducing troops into a combat area is the air assault. The advantages of speed and mobility are inherent in this type of operation. Poor planning, faulty execution and failure to inform the troops of the exact details of the plan can lead to disastrous results. There is no other time when a unit is so poorly disposed for combat action as in the initial stage of an air assault or the latter stages of an extraction. Proper planning and aggressive supervision of the execution of the plan greatly reduce our vulnerability at these times. Plans additional to the assault plan include:

a. Marshalling plan: The assembly plan for assault forces on the pickup zone (PZ); i.e. times, aircraft loads, dispersal of troops in the PZ, location of 1st lift aircraft and chalking of subsequent lifts. Consideration should be given here to movement of forces to a PZ nearer the assault area in order that turnaround times might be reduced.

b. Movement plan: Usually includes a flight route diagram into and out of the LZ. This flight route is closely coordinated with supporting fires. An orbit area should be specified in this plan for command and control aircraft, AO's, FAC's, and gunships. Plan should also provide for gunship escort along flight routes.

c. Fire support plan:

(1) Provides for a scheduled preparation and on-call fires

at the objective area. The preparation usually includes air, artillery, gunships and smoke screen.

(2) The scheduled preparation must be planned and timed in such a manner that continuous coverage of the LZ and approaches to it is obtained until immediately prior to the touchdown of the first lift of infantry. Timing must be planned in minute detail so that as the last light fire team completes its firing pass, the first lift of troops touches down. (See Figure 11, page 51).

2. AIR ASSAULT: a. The initial lift should be in a tight "Christmas Tree"; successive lifts land in trail. The personnel on the first lift of 5 ships are responsible for the security of the landing area and must have preselected positions to move to in order to accomplish this mission. These security elements will not fan out across the LZ and enter the jungle but will take positions 25 to 50 meters from touchdown and face all directions prepared to return any fire directed on lift ships. (See Figure 12, page 52). If the LZ is "hot", the security elements will be consolidated on the LZ to permit maximum air and artillery to be expended prior to the landing of more troops.

b. Tactical air "caps" must be planned to allow the ground commander an immediately available fire support means. Artillery fires should be shifted into a blocking role during the actual insertion.

c. The remaining assault aircraft, in lifts of five, touch down and personnel immediately move to their designated portion of the LZ (See Figure 13, page 53). At this time, it is imperative that dispersion is maintained and personnel rapidly clear the LZ. Assault infantry fires are

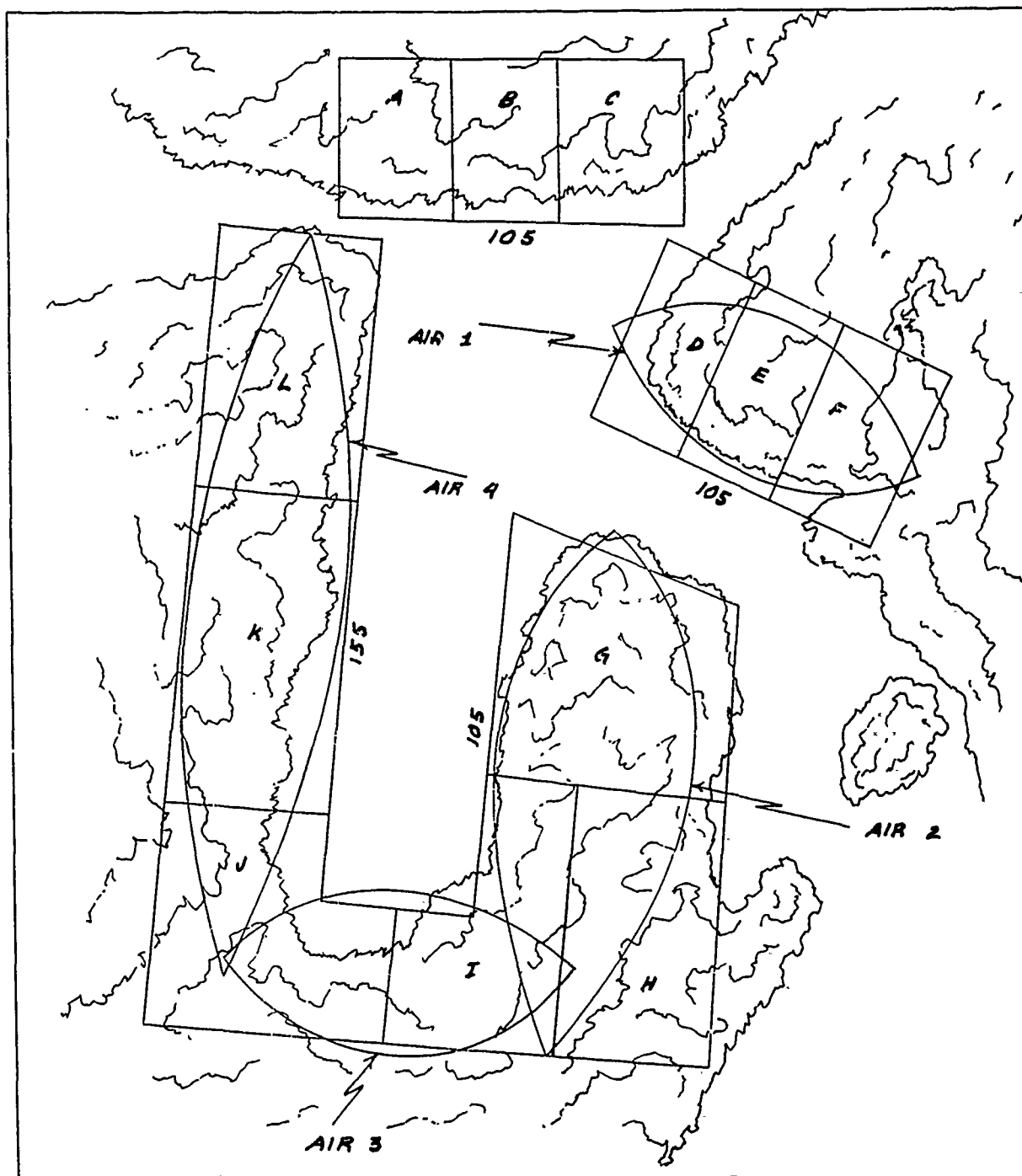


Figure 11. Artillery and air preparation.

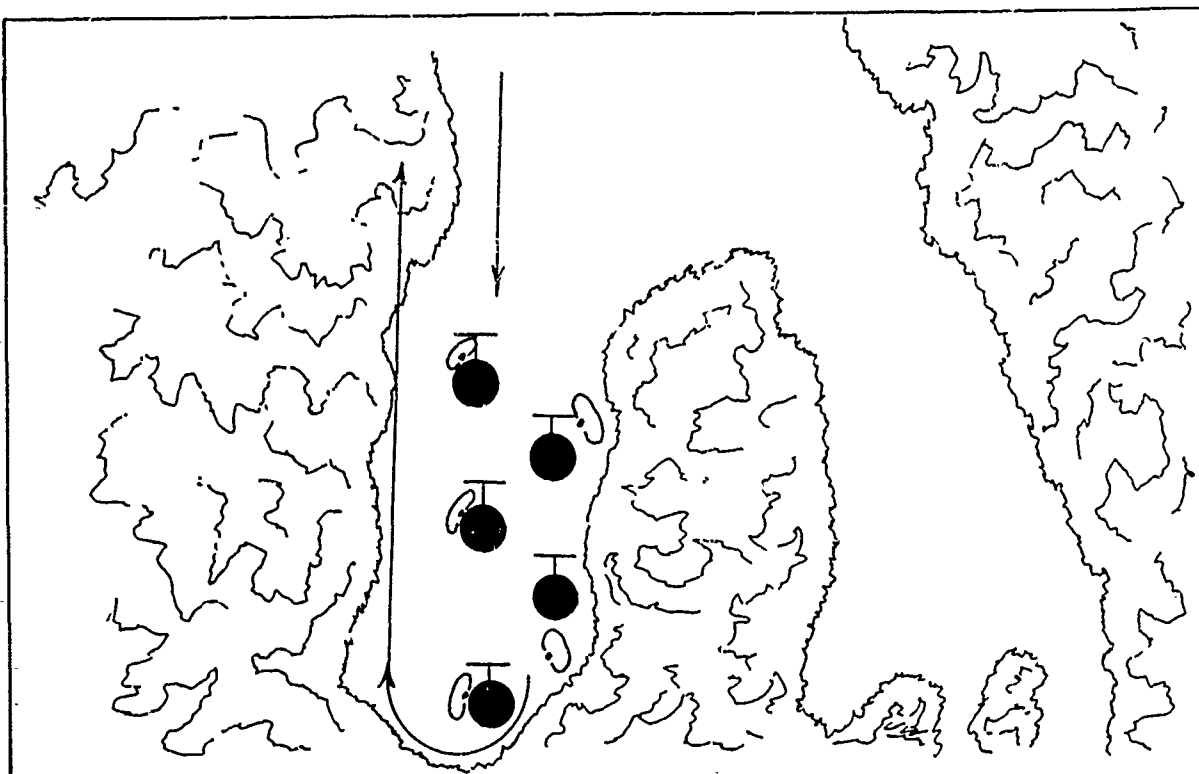


Figure 12. Air assault, first lift of five ships.

fired only by the first lift of five unless the LZ proves "hot".

d. If the LZ is to be the NDP, local security patrols must be dispatched once the assault is completed, out to a distance of 500 meters from the periphery of the entire LZ to ensure that the area is cleared prior to preparation of the night defensive position. If the LZ is not the NDP then the assault plan should cover in detail the displacement of units from LZ to the NDP area.

3. EXTRACTIONS: The extraction of units from a field location is just as critical as the air assault. Once again blocking fires are required. Extraction is effected by a gradual shrinkage of the perimeter



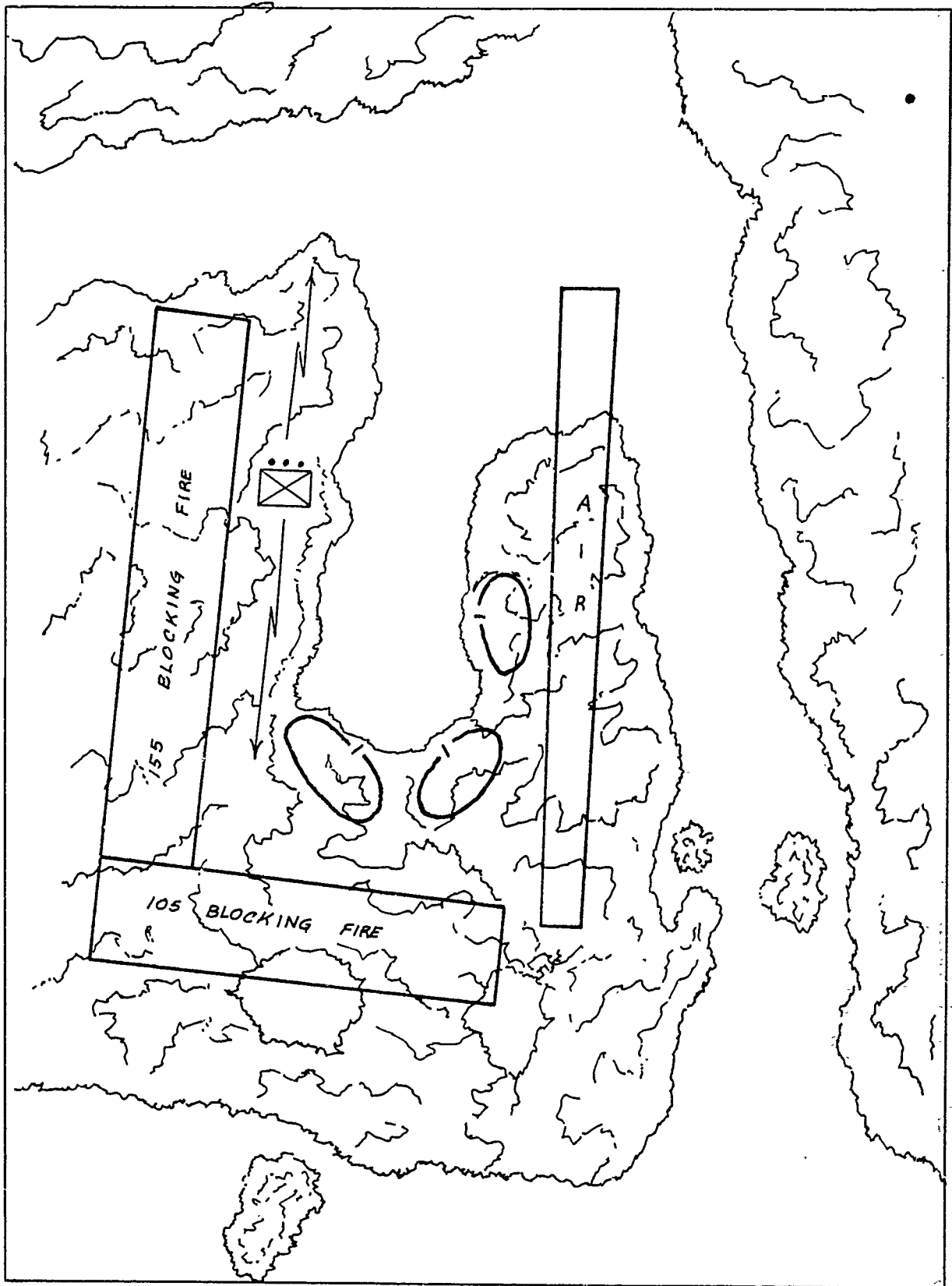


Figure 13. Disposition of forces - Completion of insertion.

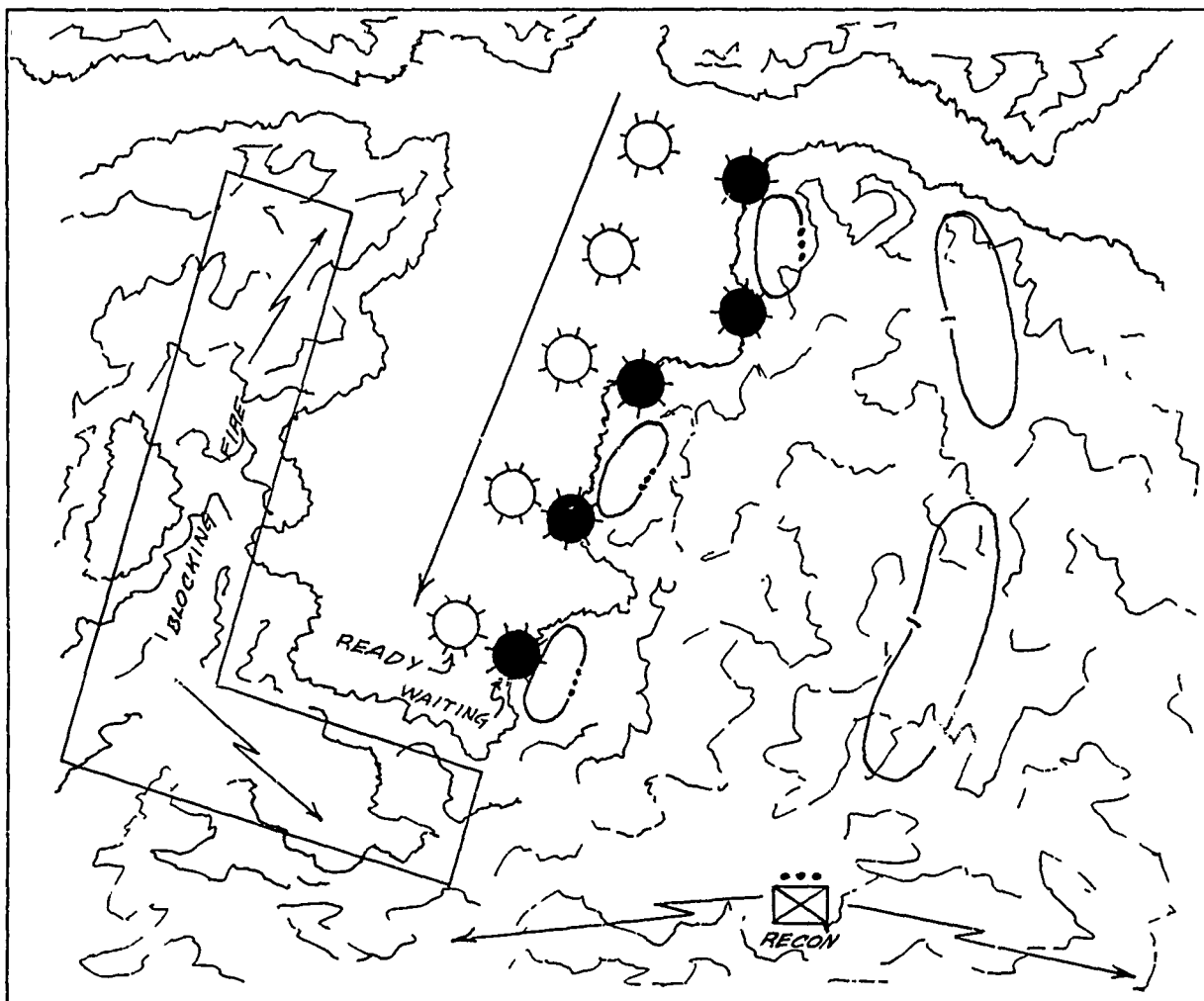


Figure 14. Extraction.

around the LZ until it is finally necessary to secure the immediate PZ with only those personnel making up the last lift of five. These personnel of the last lift must be equipped with a minimum of two claymores each in order to defend both themselves and the PZ. Two imaginary lines are established on the PZ. One, a ready line, is occupied by personnel

ready for extraction. These personnel should be in a prone position, facing the center of the PZ, with a minimum of 5 meters between individuals. The second, a waiting line, consists of the next lift of five. These personnel are positioned 5 meters apart and 30 meters from the ready line in a prone firing position facing away from the PZ. The remaining personnel, in predesignated lifts of five, are dispersed in the woodline. As the extraction starts, lifts move successively to their positions on the waiting and ready lines. As the last lift of five aircraft move into the LZ in Christmas tree formation, the security element detonates its claymores and moves to the formation for extraction. Blocking fires are then moved closer to the PZ to take up the slack created by the departure of the security element. This must be a well-planned, rehearsed and well-executed maneuver since the unit conducting it is extremely vulnerable throughout the operation. (See Figure 14, page 54). Weapons platoons are normally extracted first followed by rifle platoons.

4. USE OF SMOKE: a. Smoke is used in the 1st Infantry Division for control and for screening.

b. Control:

(1) Colors are only used as follows and denote:

(a) Red - actual enemy sighting. Free fire in effect after minimum coordination.

(b) White - used by FAC, AO's, and C&C's to mark a target to be struck.

(c) Yellow, violet, and green - location of friendly forces and activities.

(2) An air assault marking of initial touchdown point is accomplished by gunships. This touchdown point is specified by the ground commander. As troops land, they will continuously mark as they advance while insertion is taking place. To assist in command and control, a particular color should be specified for each assaulting unit; e.g. yellow: A Company, green: reconnaissance platoon, etc. When assaulting forces reach the limit of their deployment they will continue to mark until told to stop by the battalion commander.

c. Smoke screens: Helicopter smoke ships are available to screen incoming ships and should be used whenever possible. Alternate means of screening, e.g., artillery and smoke pots dropped from helicopters should be considered if smoke ships are not available.

5. AERIAL RESUPPLY: Due to the inaccessibility of most areas in which maneuver battalions are committed, the only effective means of resupply is by air. The limited aircraft resources available to the division require tight control on the number of aircraft utilized to support each maneuver battalion. The following guidelines are used in programming aircraft for resupply missions:

- a. First day of insertion - 6 CH47 or 30 UH1D sorties.
- b. Subsequent days - 4 CH47 or 20 UH1D sorties. These sorties will be programmed to carry material in the following priorities:
  - (1) First priority - water.
  - (2) Second priority - ammunition (to include night defensive pack.)

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(3) Third priority - rations.

(4) Fourth priority - other materials as required by the  
battalion commander.

## CHAPTER 5

AMBUSH

1. GENERAL: The ambush, by its very nature, offers the greatest potential for killing VC. Every day ambushes established by units of the Big Red One make contact with VC elements. Properly planned and conducted ambushes afford an outstanding method of killing, capturing, and demoralizing VC in South Vietnam. This chapter provides guidance on certain aspects of the methods and techniques of the ambush which will be implemented by all units of the 1st Infantry Division.

2. DISCUSSION: An ambush is a surprise attack from a concealed position on an enemy force. The key word is SURPRISE. Without surprise, there is no ambush. Further, in considering the general nature of an ambush, it is necessary to think in terms of its application to Vietnam; ambushes are offensive in nature. It is important to have this understanding.

3. PRIMARY CONSIDERATIONS:

a. Planning and organization:

(1) Don't delay in alerting those who will conduct the ambush. Give them time to prepare.

(2) Give maximum time to selecting the ambush site - coordinate with all personnel, particularly ARVN and RF, who may have detailed intelligence and knowledge of VC routes and activities.

(3) Conduct a ground or air reconnaissance whenever possible. As a minimum, a good map reconnaissance is essential.

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(4) Keep the plan SIMPLE. An elaborately conceived plan merely introduces unnecessary aspects that increase the chances for mistakes.

(5) Coordinate thoroughly with all individuals who can increase the prospects for success. Pin down the specifics of the intelligence situation, fire support, and the unit ready reaction force.

(6) Tailor the ambush force to its mission. Don't permit the arbitrary employment of a squad, platoon, or company as it exists. If additional men, equipment, or weapons are required, get them. Proper equipment to accomplish the mission and meet emergencies must be carried. Each man should carry a basic load of ammunition, and maximum use should be made of grenades and claymores.

(7) Coordinate with the element through whose lines the ambush force will pass. Establish the location of mines, early warning devices, lanes through protective wire, OP's and LP's, and defensive concentrations.

(8) Plan for every eventuality that may be encountered during the movement to, conduct, and return from the ambush. Issue a detailed order based upon the plan.

(9) Rehearse. Insure each man knows his job.

(10) Inspect each patrol member to insure that he has the proper equipment; that his equipment has been muffled or taped to prevent noise; and that he carries no cigarettes and lighter or other objects whose use could jeopardize the accomplishment of the mission

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and the lives of the members of the patrol.

(11) Plan H&I and other supporting fires so that the volume of friendly fire is not such that it precludes or discourages VC from approaching the ambush site or discloses the location of the ambush site.

(12) A reaction force must be planned for and prepared for each patrol. Normally, a reaction force will only be employed when the patrol encounters serious difficulty. The best security for a patrol is stealth on movement into position, maintenance of surprise and planned heavy volume of fires to include artillery and mortar after the ambush is sprung.

(13) Time distance of patrols from reinforcing forces will vary due to status of proficiency, size of the ambush patrol, enemy situation, and terrain. Normally, reinforcements should be capable of reaching the patrol within approximately 15 minutes for squad patrols, 30 minutes for platoon-size patrols. In this regard, cleared areas as those of LAM SON are special cases; ambushes in the LAM SON area should be much further out.

b. Conduct:

(1) Movement to the ambush site must be accomplished by stealth. Should the ambush force be detected during its movement, it has failed before starting.

(2) Upon reaching the ambush site, proceed through it at least 100 meters before halting, reconnoitering on the way. (See Figure 15, page 61.)



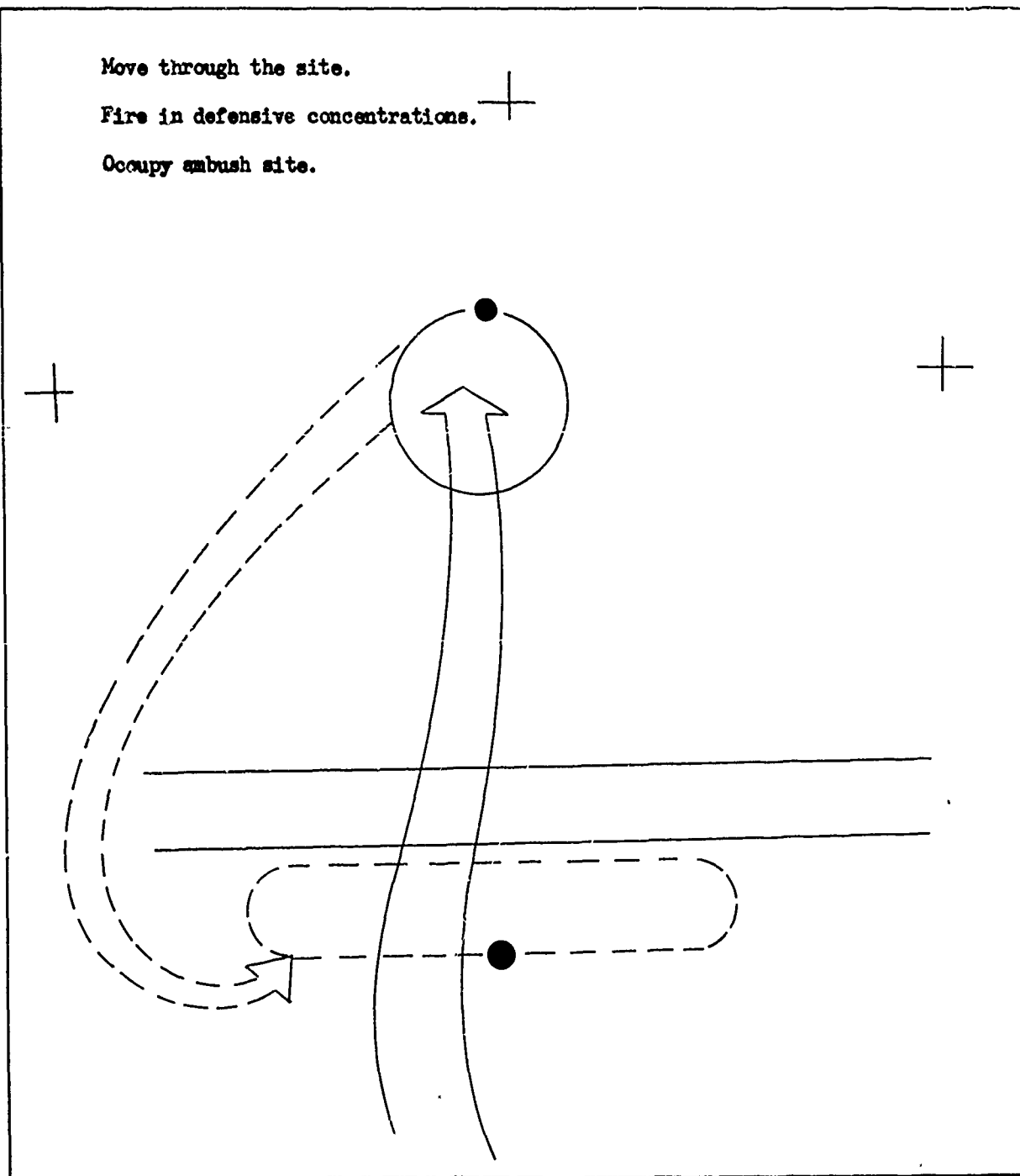
Figure 15.

MOVEMENT INTO AN AMBUSH SITE

Move through the site.

Fire in defensive concentrations. +

Occupy ambush site.



Then stop and establish a defensive perimeter, placing particular emphasis on security; fire in defensive concentrations for the ambush. This latter action will insure that effective fire support can be employed immediately when needed since the concentration will already be cleared for firing and the initial fire request can include adjustments from the known concentrations, as the situation requires.

(3) Observance of noise and light discipline must be stressed; no talking or unnecessary movement. Then, at the proper time (depending upon whether the ambush is during daylight or the hours of darkness), deliberately and quietly the personnel and weapons are positioned. Thereafter, no sound or movement must be made. The pace of extended operations normally dictates less than 100% alert on ambush patrols. However, at all times the leader or his second in command must be alert and able to alert the patrol. The alert system must be such that the patrol can be immediately alerted, and the ambush triggered without noise or movement. Eating or smoking will not be allowed in an ambush position.

(4) Careful planning, patience, and aggressiveness are the keys to success. The patrol must wait until the target is well within the killing zone. Triggering an ambush too soon is one of the most common reasons for failure. When the ambush is triggered, the patrol must lay down an immediate heavy volume of fire and aggressively follow up to search the killing zone, and finish off the target force.

(5) The ambush patrol leader is responsible for triggering

the ambush. No one else, unless specifically designated, will trigger the ambush. Judgment must be exercised in deciding the exact moment to trigger the ambush. Again, experience has shown that many ambushes fail as a result of premature triggering. Wait until the enemy is well within the killing zone and as close to the ambushers as his route will take him.

(6) Upon the initiation of a definite and definable signal, the ambush will be sprung. A pre-established specific amount of ammunition and ordnance will be expended and then all firing will cease. Initially, fire must be low and then can be adjusted on target. A ricochet from a round fired low will still kill; a round fired high is lost.

(7) Employ supporting fires quickly, as appropriate. The primary mission of the ambush patrol is to kill VC with its own weapons. However, many situations will come up where the patrol detects a VC force which does not move into the patrol's killing zone. The patrol leader must be proficient in using indirect fire to engage such forces, or to protect his patrol if necessary.

(8) Upon completion of the ambush, conduct a quick search in the ambush site and then either move to a pre-selected support site or return to the secure base, as appropriate. In any case, move immediately; do not linger at the ambush site.

#### 4. AMBUSH CONFIGURATIONS:

- a. Linear (See Figure 16) (Preferable for most situations).
- b. "L" shape (See Figure 17).
- c. Triangle (See Figure 18).

Figure 16.

LINEAR AMBUSH

Employed by all sized forces.  
Particularly well suited for a reinforced squad.

## NOTES:

#12 is the Squad Leader  
#3, 4, 5, and 6 are Flank Security  
#1 and 2 are Rear Security  
#10 and 11 are the attached Machine Gun  
Minimum 10 meters between positions  
Minimum 2 men per position

LEGEND

○	Friendly Forces
▨	Killing Zone
+	Concentrations
→	Machine Gun
⌒	Claymore

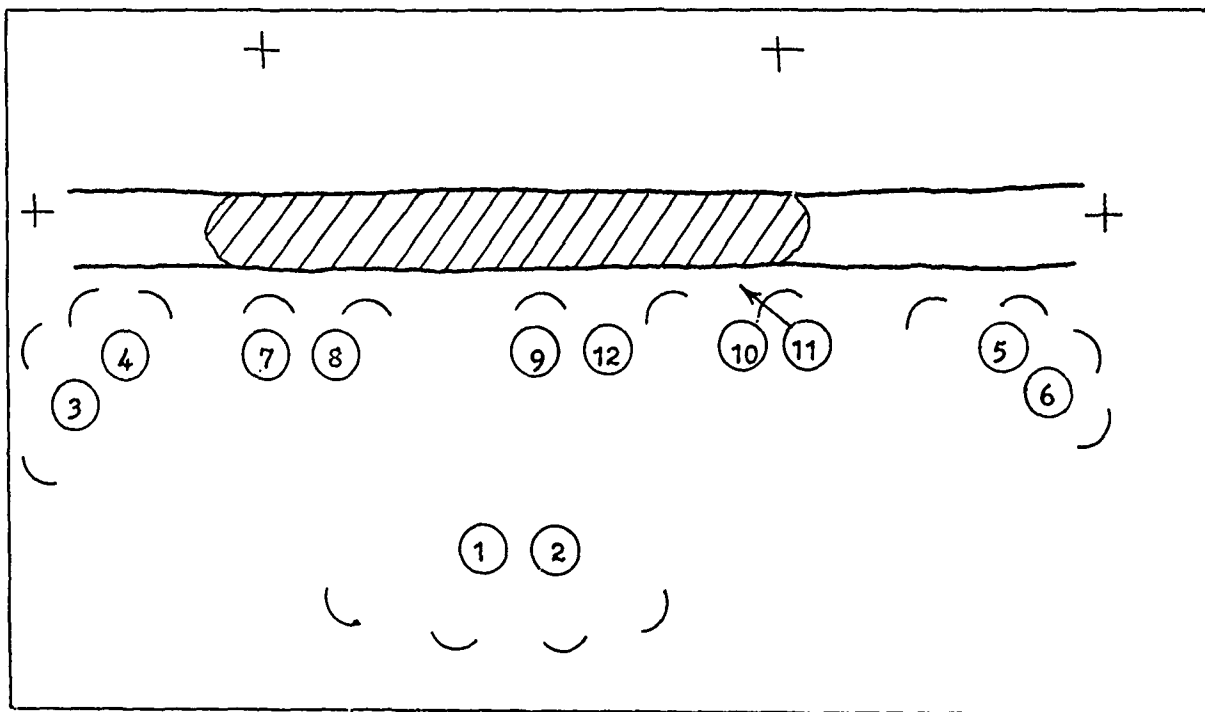


Figure 17.

"L" SHAPED AMBUSH

Use depends upon terrain limitations.  
Usually employed by platoon or larger sized forces.

## NOTES:

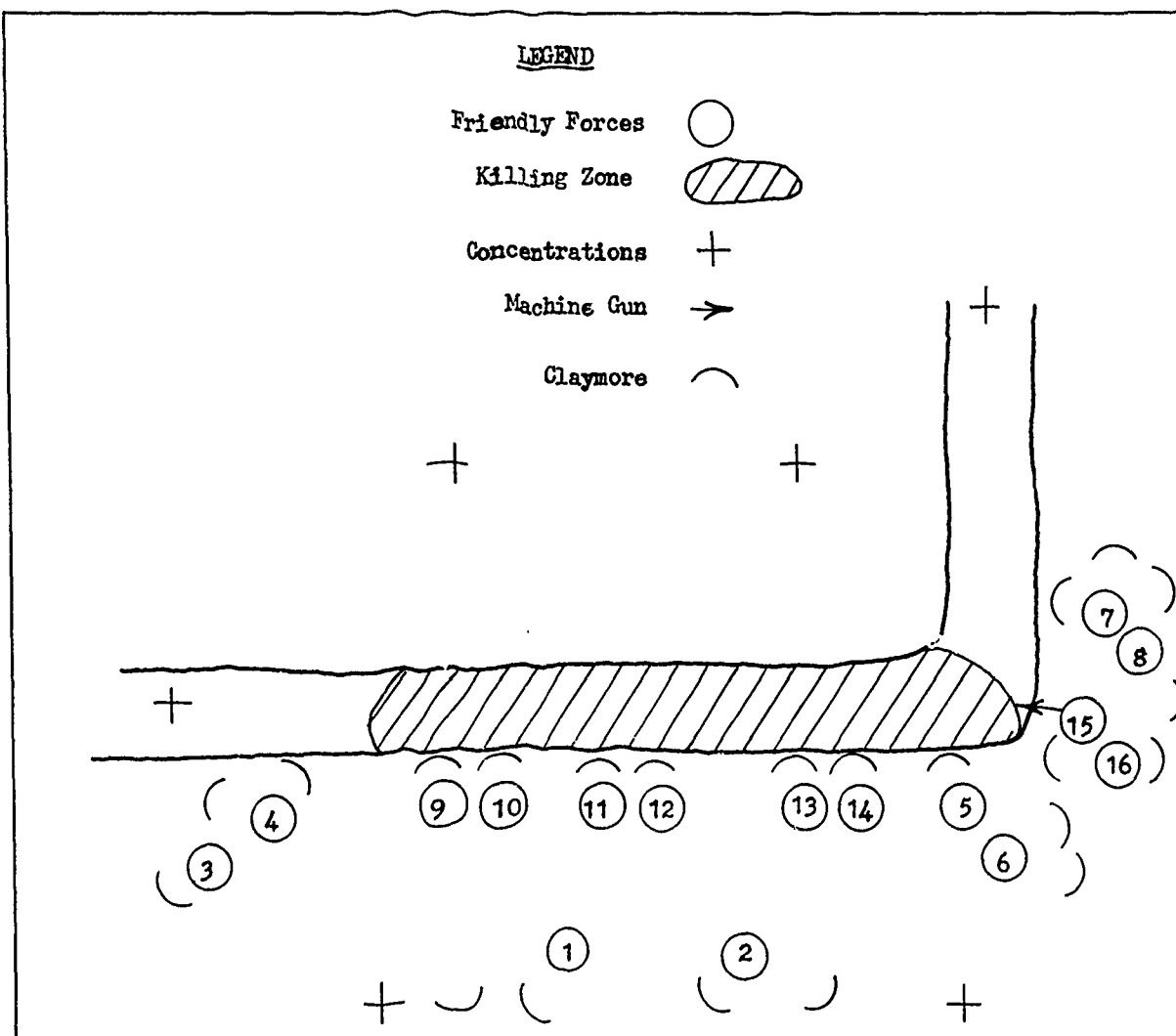
#12 is the Patrol Leader

#1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8 Flank, Rear and MG Security.

#15 and 16 Machine Gun Position.

Minimum 10 meters between positions.

Minimum 2 men per position.

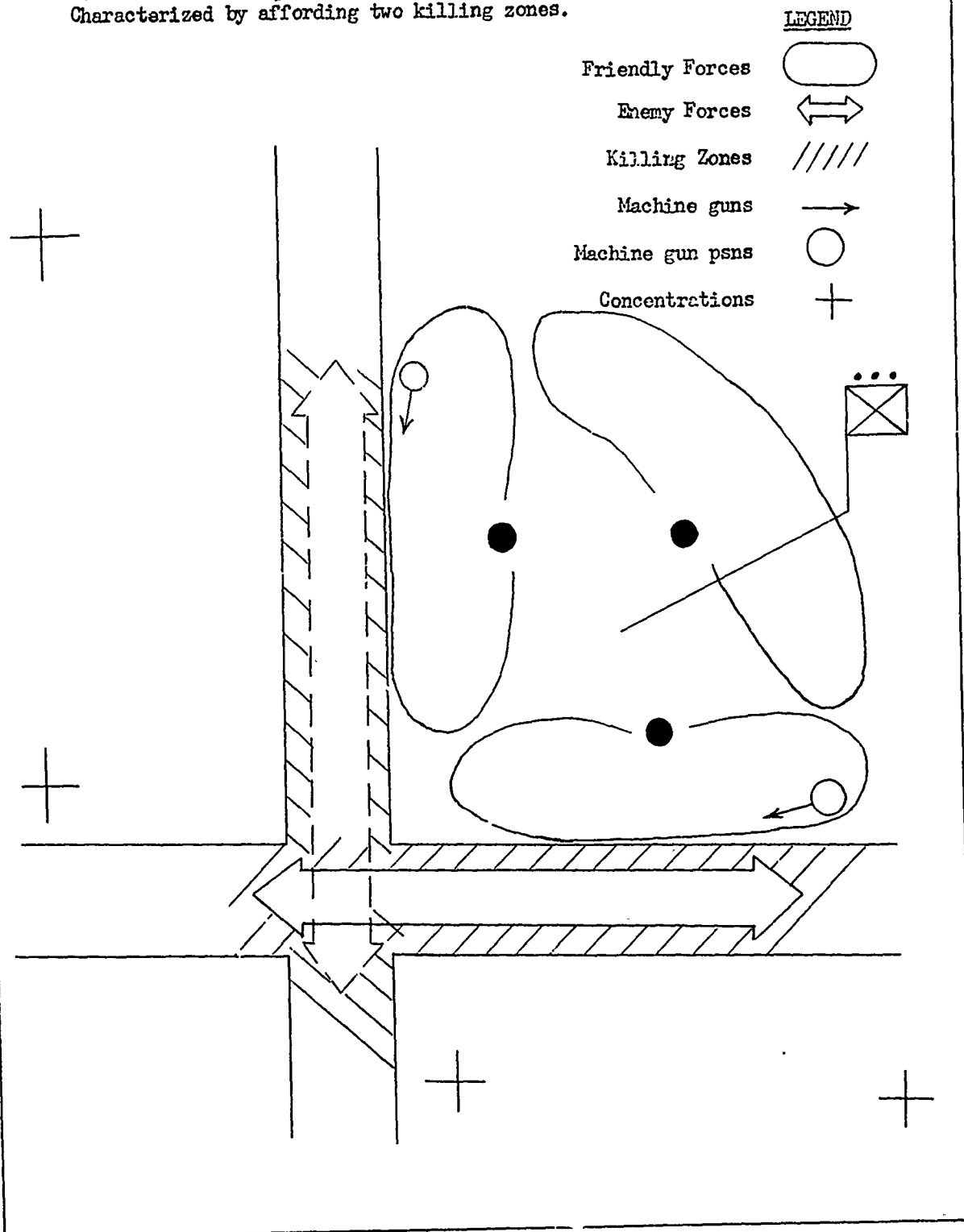


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Figure 18.

TRIANGLE AMBUSH

Employed by a platoon or larger force.  
Methods and techniques employed are the same as for other type of ambushes.  
Characterized by affording two killing zones.



5. STAY-BEHIND AMBUSH: The stay-behind ambush is a technique which should be considered by all commanders. The techniques outlined in the preceding paragraphs equally apply. The primary considerations which apply to this technique are as follows:

a. The ambush site should be selected based upon intelligence gained during the day's operation.

b. This technique lends itself to registration of supporting fires during daylight when there is a maximum of activity in the area.

c. Consideration should be given to ambushing NDP's after the main body departs and base camps found during a S&D operation which show signs of recent activity. Care should be taken in selecting a site in a base camp to insure that the unit is not committed in a role beyond its capability; i.e., squads ambushing company sized base camps. Do not limit selection to these type sites, however, in the employment of a stay-behind ambush. Trails which show signs of recent movement and stream crossings which show the same signs are equally lucrative.

6. ANTI-INTRUSION DEVICES: The utilization of the anti-intrusion devices, AN/GSS-9 and AN/PSR-1, should be incorporated into all ambushes. These devices, properly used, provide the patrol leader with an efficient, effective early warning system.

## CHAPTER 6

M16 RIFLE

1. GENERAL: The M16 rifle is one of the best weapons ever introduced into the US Army's arsenal. It is lightweight, durable and hard-hitting. The Viet Cong respect and fear it. Like any machine, the weapon requires care and attention if it is to function properly. Since its acceptance as the standard military weapon, various improvements have been made on the M16. Among these are the new buffer, a parkerized bolt and the more recent chrome chamber. The result is an even more effective weapon.

2. CARE AND CLEANING: Proper care and cleaning of the M16 rifle is mandatory for continued stoppage-free operation. The entire weapon must be cleaned at least once a day. This cleaning must also include the ammunition and magazines. Particular care should be taken to insure that the bore, chamber, carrier key, face of the bolt, extractor and the inner recesses of the bolt carrier group remain free of carbon. Additional cleanings, concentrating on these parts, should be accomplished as often as necessary. The lower receiver should never be disassembled beyond the removal of the buffer and activating spring. It can be cleaned by first removing the buffer and spring, then pouring cleaning solvent into it, swishing the solvent around and then emptying it. A patch and the tip of a cleaning rod can then be used to remove most of the solvent. What remains will provide sufficient lubricant for the parts of the lower receiver. LSA is the best lubricant for the weapon and should be



liberally applied to all metal portions of the weapon when cleaning is begun. Once applied, LSA should be allowed to stand for a time, while another part is cleaned, and then wiped off with a rag. If LSA is not available, PL SPECIAL may be used. However, only 2 drops of this lubricant should be left on the weapon. One drop should be applied to the carrier key and one drop to the bolt rings. The remainder of the weapon must be dry. Magazines and ammunition should never be lubricated. The rifleman must be trained to inspect the weapon as he cleans it, and to immediately exchange any worn or defective parts he finds.

3. CLEANING MATERIALS: The standard cleaning materials, cleaning rod, bore brush, chamber brush, cleaning solvent, LSA, and patches, must be made readily available to the soldier so that proper maintenance may be performed. It is impossible to clean the chamber properly without a chamber brush. However, supply economy must be used in the requisition and issue of cleaning materials since stocks are not inexhaustible. Leaders will insure that these items are put to the best possible use and not discarded when still usable.

4. ZEROING: Unless the individual zeros his weapon, records this zero, and confirms it periodically, his chances of hitting a target are doubtful. Replacements will zero their assigned weapon prior to being introduced into a tactical operation. All personnel will confirm their zero periodically. In the field, improvised targets can be used to accomplish this; in base camp, range facilities may be used.

5. FAMILIARIZATION FIRING: Familiarization firing is a method by

which commanders can develop the individual's confidence in his weapon and improve individual and unit marksmanship, as well as rotate ammunition loads. Familiarization firing exercises can take many forms, some of which are:

- a. Firing in a field location.
- b. Training in "Instinct Shooting" techniques.
- c. Squad firing exercises emphasizing control, fire discipline and fire distribution.
- d. Semi-automatic and automatic fire exercises.

6. The only limits to an effective unit program on M16 maintenance, inspection and training are the limits of the unit commander's imagination, resourcefulness, and determination to develop such a program. The objective is to make good soldiers and a good weapon even better.

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CHAPTER 7

FIELD SOP

Units will develop meaningful field SOP's to insure compliance with all of the foregoing. At the inclosure is a sample SOP designed for all ranks of a battalion. Note that basic loads in the sample exceed in some cases those specified throughout this booklet. This is a prerogative of the unit commander. Further note that those items with an asterisk are division policy.

INCLOSURE 1S A M P L E   F I E L D

HEADQUARTERS  
\_\_\_\_ BATTALION, \_\_\_\_ INFANTRY  
APO San Francisco 96345

OFFICE SYMBOL

Date

SUBJECT: Field SOP

TO: All Concerned

The following items are SOP for this battalion and will be adhered to at all times. All combat leaders, to include fireteam leaders, will be familiar with the contents of this SOP. Changes to this SOP will be verbal when necessary for specific operations. Recommendations for permanent changes, based on combat experience, are encouraged and should be submitted to the S3 or the Executive Officer.

1. Every man will carry 20 sandbags at all times when carrying rucksacks.
2. No sandbags will be left when closing an NDP. All sandbags will be emptied and turned in to the supply point for extraction.
3. Every man, except RTO's, will carry one (1) claymore into the NDP.
4. Every man will carry two smoke grenades at all times. Company Commanders and platoon leaders will, in addition, have one sandbag full

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S A M P L E F I E L D S O P

OFFICE SYMBOL  
SUBJECT: Field SOP

Date

of smoke grenades available to him at all times.

5. Each squad will carry a minimum of two (2) entrenching tools on patrol. All other pioneer tools should be hand carried into the NDP area.

6. The basic load for Rifle, M16 and M14, is 14 magazines loaded with 18 rounds per magazine. Magazines will not exceed one (1) tracer per four (4) rounds. (First four (4) through every fourth, total of eight (8)).

7. The basic load for the MG is 1,000 rounds per gun. One extra case will be stockpiled at the MG bunker.

8. Grenadiers will carry a basic load of 25 rounds HE, 5 rounds of cannister, and CS and illumination as necessary.

9. Every man will carry two frag grenades. Grenades must be carried in a container such as canteen carrier or ammo pouch.

\* 10. Each rifle squad will carry one (1) M72 LAW.

\* 11. Each rifle squad member will carry one (1) trip flare.

12. Each platoon will carry 10 lbs of Flextec, 10 blasting caps, and 20 feet of fuse cord on all combat operations.

13. Each platoon will carry one (1) standard length of rope (120 ft) and 1 snap link per man.

\* 14. Each man will carry a complete set of weapons cleaning equipment:

1 Bore Brush, 1 Chamber Brush, 1 Cleaning Rod, 10 Cleaning Patches, 1 Mosquito Repellent Bottle, at least 1/3 full of oil.

In addition each squad will carry one (1) extra bottle of oil, and one (1)

8C

S A M P L E   F I E L D   S O P

OFFICE SYMBOL

Date

SUBJECT: Field SOP

tube of LSA. All other personnel will carry a complete set of weapons cleaning equipment appropriate for his weapon.

- \* 15. Each company will carry a minimum of two (2) M67, 90mm recoilless rifles with 12 rounds of cannister per weapon. These will be brought into the NDP with defense packet.
- \* 16. Each platoon will carry a minimum of one Starlight Scope into NDP locations.
- \* 17. Each ambush patrol will deploy with a minimum of one Starlight Scope.
- \* 18. All ambush patrols will deploy with two (2) radios.
- 19. For planning purposes, mortars will be inserted into LZ/NDP last and will be extracted first.
- 20. All weapons will be cleared prior to an insertion or extraction. The exception to this policy will be the element that is first in or last out, usually the reconnaissance platoon.
- 21. All leaders will constantly insure an equal distribution of weapons with priority to M60 MG's and M79 grenade launchers. (12 per company).
- \* 22. Ponchos and other sleeping area covers will not be erected higher than the berm of the fighting position.
- 23. Fighting positions will be sandbagged to the rear for a sleeping area. These sleeping areas will be sandbagged a minimum of three bags high if ground level or two high if sleeping area is dug in.

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S A M P L E F I E L D S O P

OFFICE SYMBOL  
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Date

24. NDP locations will be policed NLT 60 minutes prior to extraction and company commanders will report to the Executive Officer when accomplished. Extra care will be given to insuring NO ammunition is left behind.

25. A basic load of 5 cases of M79 HE will be maintained at the Platoon CP's.

26. Each NDP position will establish a minimum of five (5) claymores at night. Claymores will be taken out of position each morning with wires left in place.

27. Each company will be initially supplied with a minimum of 350 rounds HE and 50 rounds of illumination for 81mm mortars. H & I's will not exceed 200 rounds each night unless directed. At no time will companies have less than 150 rounds HE on hand after H & I's are completed.

28. When mortars are not in use, one tube will be layed for illumination on the ambush site and one tube on the most critical counter-mortar target.

29. Each company will establish wire communication within NDP down to platoon level as a minimum.

30. Each company will establish not less than four (4) LP's each night. LP's will be a minimum of 50 meters from perimeter and should have wire communication as primary and radio as alternate.

31. Each squad will have a minimum of two (2) flashlights. At least one (1) flashlight per squad will be carried on all patrols.

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S A M P L E   F I E L D   S O P

OFFICE SYMBOL  
SUBJECT: Field SOP

Date

32. Company commanders will insure that their perimeter can be adequately marked for air support prior to 1800 hours each evening. Priority will be flame pots, flashlights, and trip flares.

33. Company commanders will submit a sketch of their perimeter to the S3 as soon as possible after position has been established. This sketch will include the company CP, MG positions and FPL's, and 90 RR positions and PDF's.

34. Each company will carry 15 rounds of 81mm HE per tube when carrying mortars.

35. Each company will have 30 flak vests available at all times. Ambush patrols will deploy with one (1) vest per man. All mortar crews will wear vests when firing and all point men will wear vests when on patrol.

36. Each company will insure that each man receives a clean change of clothes every three days.

37. For helicopter moves, each aircraft load will be briefed on proper loading and unloading. Emphasis will be placed on loading and unloading from both sides of the helicopter, moving in front of chopper only, and the loading and unloading of mortar equipment, with special emphasis on rapid movement.

\* 38. Fighting positions will be constructed as outlined in the "Fundamentals of Infantry Tactics".



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S A M P L E   F I E L D   S O P

OFFICE SYMBOL  
SUBJECT: Field SOP

Date

39. Company commanders will insure that all positions are checked by platoon leaders. This check will be conducted by placing the soldier in his position and observing his ability to fight from that position. Whenever possible, each soldier should be allowed to fire from his position. This can be arranged by coordination with the S3.

40. Companies will always carry one (1) 292 antenna. Companies will maintain contact with battalion at all times. Battalion will announce time for Sitreps. Company commanders will be within 15 seconds of a radio at all times while in a field position.

41. Company commanders will insure that the "chow line" is established away from the perimeter and all available cover is used.

\* 42. Units near the resupply pad will insure that all gear is secured; particularly ponchos and air mattresses. This can be accomplished by using filled sandbags.

43. New batteries will be installed in radios before all operations and operators will always carry a minimum of one spare.

44. Each man will carry a basic load of three C-ration meals for insertions and extractions and one C-ration on patrols.

45. All men will prepare slips of paper with names, ranks, ASN, and units for all movement by fixed-wing aircraft, and will present these upon boarding the aircraft.

\* 46. All men will wear their identification tags at all times.

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S A M P L E   F I E L D   S O P

OFFICE SYMBOL  
SUBJECT: Field SOP

Date

47. Platoon leaders will check all positions once before and once after midnight. This also applies to platoon sergeants and squad leaders.

\* 48. Squad leaders will inspect all weapons daily. Other leaders will spot check to insure that weapons are being maintained properly.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

SIGNATURE BLOCK  
Captain, Infantry  
Adjutant

UNCLASSIFIED

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